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(11562 A)

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PART III.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

EASTERN AFFAIRS.

[ISSUED SUPPLEMENTARY TO PART II (11562).]

42

1919.

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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

EASTERN AFFAIRS.

[ISSUED SUPPLEMENTARY TO PART II (11562).]

1919.

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Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs.

PART III.

[Issued supplementary to Part II.]

[9524/ME 44]

No. 1.

Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe to Mr. Balfour.—(Received January 7.)

(No. 10.)
Sir,

Constantinople, January 2, 1919.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 158 of the 11th ultimo, on the subject of the re-establishment of Capitulations, I have the honour to inform you that this question was brought up again at the last meeting of the High Commissioners, the French High Commissioner proposing the despatch to the Porte of the note, copy of which forms my first enclosure. Both Admiral Amet and my Italian colleague stated that they were experiencing great annoyance and trouble on account of the measures taken against their respective subjects by the Turkish authorities on matters which depended on the maintenance of the Capitulations. I stated that, for my part, I was ignorant that British subjects were being subjected to any such inconveniences, but that I would enquire. I maintained the same objections to any reference to the Capitulations in our communication with the Porte, expressing the view that we ought to act as if they had never been annulled; I had already, for instance, instructed Mr. Waugh to advise British subjects unofficially not to pay the temettu and to act as if the Capitulations were still in force. I suggested an alternative note, copy of which I enclose herewith, which I said appeared to be unobjectionable, though I should not be ready to sign it without your instructions.

I trust that this important question is being carefully considered by the Foreign Office. The existing fabric of the Capitulations is somewhat like an old chair made of odd pieces of wood, much broken and tied together with pieces of string, which cannot be sat in with any feeling of comfort or security. It is necessary to take advantage of the present state of affairs to provide an entirely new article.

I have the honour to suggest that the broad principles of new treaties to replace the Capitulations should be laid down in the preliminaries of peace, and the new treaties themselves should be complementary to the definite Treaty of Peace and signed simultaneously with it. It is a matter for consideration how far neutrals will profit by the new conditions, and a difficult problem will be presented by the question of the treatment of Hellenic subjects in Turkey. If Hellenic subjects enjoy the benefits of Capitulations, it becomes hard to deny them to Greek Ottomans; and if the Greeks possess them, it will be argued that the other Christian subjects of Turkey should benefit likewise. But what we must in any event obtain is complete security for the persons and properties of British subjects together with safeguards against abuse of the concessions which we probably shall be obliged to make as regards fiscal immunities.

I shall be grateful for a telegraphic reply as to present action.

I have, &c.

A. CALTHORPE,

High Commissioner.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

Note suggested by the French High Commissioner for communication to the Sublime Porte.

LES Hauts-Commissaires des trois Puissances alliées estiment nécessaire de rappeler à la Sublime Porte que leurs Gouvernements considèrent comme illégaux tous actes, de toute espèce, qui ont découlé de la décision arbitraire et unilatérale, prise par les Gouvernements ottomans en 1914, d'abroger le régime capitulaire et maintiennent intégralement le point de vue qui fut énoncé par les Ambassadeurs de France, Grande-Bretagne et Italie dans leur note identique du 10 septembre 1914.

Afin de ne pas augmenter encore la liste des dommages portés aux ressortissants britanniques, français et italiens, et dont la réparation sera poursuivie en son temps, les trois Hauts-Commissaires pressent vivement la Sublime Porte de vouloir bien donner d'urgence les instructions les plus formelles aux Administrations de l'État afin qu'elles cessent d'appliquer aux sujets de l'Entente les mesures qui tirent leur origine des lois, décrets et règlements substitués au régime capitulaire depuis 1914 par une procédure violente que le Gouvernement actuel est certainement le premier à réprouver.

Constantinople, le

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

Note suggested by the British High Commissioner for communication to the Sublime Porte.

THE High Commissioners of the three Allied Powers have the honour to inform the Sublime Porte that the note addressed by the Sublime Porte to the Ambassadors of the Great Powers, dated , 1914, cannot be regarded as having any effect or force. They request the Sublime Porte to issue orders accordingly without delay to all authorities concerned.

[12377/ME 44]

No. 2.

Political Resident, Aden, to Mr. Balfour.—(Received January 22.)

(No. C. 2. Confidential.)

Sir, I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, three copies of the Aden news letter for the months of November and December 1918, to His Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner, Cairo.

I have, &c.

J. M. STEWART, Major-General.

Enclosure in No. 2.

Aden News Letter for the Months of November and December 1918.

Major-General Stewart to Sir R. Wingate.

(Secret.)

Dear Sir Reginald Wingate,

Aden, January 3, 1919.

IN consequence of the refusal of the Amir of Dala to pay certain taxes to the Turks, Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil with the Turks, it is reported, attacked and occupied Dala on the 18th October last, Amir Nasir with his brother Abdul Hamid and followers fleeing to An Nadira. The Amir is said to have since returned to Dala with 500 Zaidi followers of the imam, and his brother to have carried a letter from the imam to Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil and returned to the imam with the latter's reply.

Information received from different informants points to the fact that the Turks last month sent to the Yemen large quantities of arms and ammunition. They are also said to have sent 12 guns and 100 camel-loads of small ammunition to Sheikh

Mahomed Nasir Mukbil, 20 boxes of ammunition to Sheikh Mahomed Ahmed Noman of Hujaria, and 12 rifles and 4 boxes of ammunition to the Kotaibi Sheikh and his cousin Mukbil Abdulla.

This report was confirmed by the Abdali Sultan, who heard that Mahomed Nasir Mukbil had returned the guns because he had no ammunition for them. The Sultan also heard that the Haushabi Sultan has been given arms and ammunition by the Pasha, and has left Lahej with Mahomed-el-Umairi. The report was, however, denied by Ali Said Pasha, who informed me that he had sent up only two guns to protect the road for the Turks coming down from Yemen.

Saleh Saad-al-Damari, the messenger who went with our letter to Sheikh Mansoor-bin-Ali of al-Udain, reports that he heard at Udain that the following sheikhs complied with the imam's invitation and have gone to him:—

Mansoor-bin-Ali Abdalla and his brother,
Ibn-an-Nakib of al-Udain,
Abu Salama of Ibb,
Sayid Yehia of Ta'iz.

The messenger also reports that the Turks have evacuated Ta'iz and have burnt the quarters which they occupied. They have also destroyed the fort there. This report has not been confirmed.

The imam's emissary, Nakib Abdul Wahid, who left Aden via Gaizan, is reported to have been well treated by the Idrisi while at Gaizan, and to have been sent off with an escort.

A report says that the Dambaris and Alawis intercepted a kafila from Mawia en route to Aden, and have carried away 24 camels laden with ghee, sultanas, almonds, &c., after killing 4 persons. They are also reported to have looted 4 cows and a camel from Zaida.

The Mansab of Waht, who proved himself very treacherous during the occupation of Lahej by the Turks, is said to have fled to Hujaria with his son. Another report says that the Mansab has not left, as he cannot walk. This man was previously erroneously reported to be dead.

After the declaration of the armistice, he and others, including Mohamed-el-Umairi and Hussein-el-Ahil attempted to get Sultan Ali-bin-Ahmed Fadl, the son of the late Sultan Sir Ahmed-bin-Fadl, elected as the ruler of Lahej, and endeavoured without success to obtain the Turkish commander's support to this scheme.

People who arrived lately from the interior reported that Ismail Effendi and Shokat Bey had left Yemen with 500 Turks for Hodeida via Zabeid, and that the Wali (Governor) was also on the move towards Hodeida with 300 Turks.

From the same source we learn that the Imam has concentrated a large force at Riyashiyah and Yereen.

After the declaration of the armistice the Fadli Sultan wrote to me saying that he was sending his son, Abdulla-bin-Hussein, to Aden to renew friendly relations. I declined to receive Abdulla, and said Sultan Hussein should either come himself or send his grandson, Abdul Kader, in which case I should hear whatever explanations he had to offer of his past conduct. Sultan Hussein thereupon arrived himself and urged that he had been friendly to the Turks only under *force majeure*. He is now very old and feeble and almost totally blind. He was interviewed by Major Reilly. He was anxious to know what we propose to do with him, and was told that his case was under consideration. He expressed his willingness to appoint his grandson Abdul Kader as his successor after his death, but asked us to assist him in inducing Abdul Kader to accept the appointment, as he had once before refused it.

His attention was drawn to the behaviour of his son Abdulla, who had been interfering with caravans passing through his territory and levying taxes. He promised to stop him as soon as he returned to Abyan.

Sultan Hussein left Aden on the 28th December, 1918. Sultan Abdul Kader, who had first gone to Lahej, arrived in Aden on a visit to the Resident on the 29th December.

The Abdali Sultan was installed in his capital on the 14th December, 1918, with appropriate ceremony, during which the message of congratulation from His Majesty the King-Emperor to the Sultan was read.

The Haushabi Sultan sent his son and Minister with a few followers to General Beatty at Lahej. Sultan Ali Mana was asked to come to Lahej himself, and has now done so. He will be interviewed by Colonel Jacob, who has gone to Lahej.

Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil, of Mawia, has also made overtures to General Beatty, and proposed that a British representative should go to Mawia to discuss the establishment of friendly relations. I have replied inviting him to come to Lahej himself, where he will be interviewed by Colonel Jacob.

One of the Hashid sheikhs, Abdoo Ali, of Bal Harib, who recently arrived here from Gaizan, reports that he heard while at Gaizan that the Imam had deputed one of his lieutenants, Abdalla-bin-Kasen, to Manader and Moor, with a message to Yehia Ali Thawab, Ibn-al-Haig, and the Turkish officers there, asking them not to surrender to the British. In case they are short of foodstuffs, ammunition, &c., the imam promises to supply them on condition that they join him, in which case they would be allowed to hold their former posts [sic].

Since all the above tribal information was obtained the situation has changed materially. The Turkish forces in Lahej have surrendered, and some 2,000 of these have been sent to Egypt. Hodeida has been occupied after slight opposition and direct relations established with the imam and the Turkish commanders in the Yemen. The imam is sending a deputation, which has already arrived in Hodeida, and the Turkish officers despatched by the corps commander are en route from Hodeida to Aden.

In Asir too Captain Clayton has been in direct correspondence with Mohiuddin Pasha, the military commander and Governor of Asir, with a view to arranging the surrender of his troops.

Yours sincerely,
J. M. STEWART.

[3567/ME 44]

No. 3.

Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe to Mr. Balfour.—(Received January 7.)

(No. 34.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 4, 1919.

MY telegram No. 158.

French and Italian High Commissioners are very anxious to address a note to the Porte on the subject of Capitulations, stating that all acts consequential on decision of Turkish Government in 1914 to abolish them are illegal, and maintaining views enounced in identic note of Ambassadors of the 4th November of that year, and demanding cancellation of all measures taken in consequence of abolition.

I maintain my objection to this step pending armistice, but I request your instructions as soon as possible.

[11455/ME 44]

No. 4.

Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe to Mr. Balfour.—(Received January 6.)

(No. 21.)
Sir,

Constantinople, January 6, 1919.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 10 of the 2nd January, 1919, on the subject of the Capitulations, I have the honour to report that at the last meeting of the High Commissioners, my French and Italian colleagues reintroduced the topic and were very anxious that I should sign the identic note, copy of which I enclose herewith. I reiterated the objection to doing so which I had previously expressed, and explained that as I had already referred the matter to your decision, it was impossible for me to take any action until I had received your instructions.

I thought it necessary to request your instructions by telegraph (No. 158 of the 4th January) in view of the attitude taken by my colleagues.

I have, &c.

A. CALTHORPE,
High Commissioner.

Enclosure in No. 4.

Draft Identic Note for communication to the Sublime Porte.

LES Hauts-Commissaires des trois Puissances alliées estiment nécessaire de rappeler à la Sublime Porte que leurs Gouvernements considèrent comme illégaux tous actes, de toute espèce, qui ont découlé de la décision arbitraire et unilatérale, prise par les Gouvernants ottomans en 1914, d'abroger le régime capitulaire et maintiennent intégralement le point de vue qui fut énoncé par les Ambassadeurs de France, Grande-Bretagne et Italie dans leur note identique du 10 septembre 1914.

Afin de ne pas augmenter encore la liste des dommages portés aux ressortissants britanniques, français et italiens, et dont la réparation sera poursuivie en son temps, les trois Hauts-Commissaires pressent vivement la Sublime Porte pour qu'elle veuille bien donner d'urgence les instructions les plus formelles aux Administrations de l'État afin qu'elles cessent d'appliquer aux sujets de l'Entente les mesures qui tirent leur origine des lois, décrets et règlements substitués au régime capitulaire depuis 1914 par une procédure violente que le Gouvernement actuel est certainement le premier à réprouver.

[3006/ME 44]

No. 5.

Earl Curzon to Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe (Constantinople).

(No. 86.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 13, 1919.

CAPITULATIONS in Turkey.

Your telegram No. 34 of 4th January.

On 3rd January French Ambassador was informed that the question of the juridical régime to be established in Turkey should, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, be reserved for discussion in Paris, seeing that it is only a part of the larger problem of the status and extent of territory to be accorded to any Turkish State which it may be decided to establish. Should the French Government in the meanwhile desire to place on record fact that they do not recognise the unilateral abrogation of the Capitulations by the Turkish Government His Majesty's Government would have no objection to associating themselves with them in such a step.

French Embassy has also asked that Mr. Waugh be instructed to discuss the whole question with M. Cilliére, and that these two officials should report for the information of their respective Governments.

If you see no objection, you may authorise Mr. Waugh to communicate with M. Cilliére on the subject, but he should confine himself strictly in his conversations to the line of policy laid down in the note quoted above.

(Repeated to Paris, No. 150.)

[18736/ME 44]

No. 6.

Mr. Balfour to Earl Curzon.—(Received February 3.)

(No. 31.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 1, 1919.

I RECEIVED your despatches Nos. 114 and 127 of the 25th and 27th January on the subject of the re-establishment of the Capitulations in Turkey.

2. I note that His Majesty's High Commissioner at Constantinople is objecting to the protest which the French and Italian Governments wish to present to the Ottoman Government in the view that His Majesty's Government should act as if the Capitulations had never been annulled, and that therefore no reference thereto should be made in any communication to the Ottoman Government.

3. Although, however, the action of the Ottoman Government in October 1914 had no legal effect, it appears difficult to see on what principle it can be disputed that the Capitulations were either abrogated by the outbreak of war or at any rate placed in suspense during its continuance. In the first case, they would have to be specifically revived in the Treaty of Peace; and in the second case, even if they were regarded as revived automatically on the establishment of peace, this could not yet be considered as having taken place, as peace will not be re-established until the formal ratification of the treaty.

4. It would appear, indeed, that war between Turkey and a capitulatory Power has always been regarded as abrogating, or at any rate suspending, the capitulatory rights of the latter; for instance, article 9 of the Treaty of Constantinople of 1897 seems clearly to proceed on the assumption that the revival of Greek capitulatory rights was necessary.

5. If this view is correct, the simplest means of dealing with the existing situation would appear to be to insert a provision in the preliminaries of peace with Turkey providing for the immediate revival of the capitulatory rights. This would, however, probably prolong the existing unsatisfactory situation considerably.

6. I should therefore be glad to know, in the first instance, whether any action has been taken by the Foreign Office on Admiral Calthorpe's despatches Nos. 10 and 21 of the 2nd and 6th January respectively, or if any reply was sent to his telegram No. 158 of the 11th December, and if not, whether any, and if so, what action or reply is contemplated by the Foreign Office.

7. I would add that the draft of the final Treaty of Peace with Turkey, which was begun at the Foreign Office and is being continued here, provides that the capitulatory rights of the Allied Governments "shall remain in force until they are abolished by agreement," thus avoiding too close a definition of the Allied Governments' view as to the present position of the Capitulations.

I am, &c.

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.

[23452/ME 44]

No. 7.

Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe to Earl Curzon.—(Received February 11.)

(No. 110.)

Sir,

Constantinople, February 3, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith copies of two notes, dated the 19th and 30th January respectively, on the subject of Capitulations, addressed to the Turkish Government by the Allied High Commissioners.

I have, &c.

A. CALTHORPE,

High Commissioner.

Enclosure 1 in No. 7.

Joint Allied Note presented to Turkish Government.

LES Hauts-Commissaires des trois Puissances alliées jugent nécessaire de rappeler à la Sublime Porte que leurs Gouvernements considèrent comme illégaux tous actes, de toute espèce, qui ont découlé de la décision arbitraire et unilatérale, prise par les Gouvernements ottomans en 1914, d'abroger le régime capitulaire et maintiennent intégralement le point de vue qui fut énoncé par les Ambassadeurs de France, Grande-Bretagne et Italie dans leur note identique du 10 septembre 1914.

Afin de ne pas augmenter encore la liste des dommages portés aux ressortissants britanniques, français et italiens, dont la réparation sera poursuivie en son temps, et en faisant toutes réserves sur les conditions du régime juridique qu'il paraîtra aux Puissances de l'Entente convenable d'établir en Turquie, les trois Hauts-Commissaires invitent la Sublime Porte à donner d'urgence les instructions les plus formelles aux Administrations de l'État afin qu'elles cessent d'appliquer aux sujets de l'Entente les mesures qui tirent leur origine des lois, décrets et règlements substitués au régime capitulaire depuis 1914.

RICHARD WEBB.
SFORZA.
AMET.

Constantinople, le 19 janvier 1919.

[20446/W/44]

No. 7*.

Earl Curzon to M. Cambon.

Your Excellency,

Foreign Office, February 21, 1919.

IN a memorandum communicated to Sir Ronald Graham on the 13th January, M. de Fleuriau protested against the alleged unfriendly action of the military authorities in Bagdad to Captain Sciard in making arrangements for his departure from Mesopotamia, and cited the case as an instance of proceedings and intrigues on the part of British officials towards French officers, which were of a disobliging nature, and to which the French Government took serious exception. Your Excellency also mentioned the case in a recent conversation with me. I have the honour to inform you that a full report was called for from General Marshall on this subject and has now been received.

2. It appears from this report that Commandant Sciard in his reply to the note from General Marshall, which was quoted by M. de Fleuriau in the memorandum referred to, informed the General that he had himself previously suggested to the French Government that he should be recalled from Mesopotamia, and thanked General Marshall for having raised the question. Commandant Sciard went on to say that, as he could not leave Mesopotamia without the sanction of the French Government, he had wired to them a summary of General Marshall's note and had asked for orders. Commandant Sciard's reply concluded with a further expression of gratitude for the treatment accorded to him by the British military authorities during his employment in Mesopotamia.

3. On the following day, the usual routine order for the arrangement of Commandant Sciard's passage was issued and a copy was sent to Commandant Sciard for his information. Commandant Sciard understood the publication of this order to indicate General Marshall's intention of unduly hastening his departure. He accordingly lodged a complaint with General Marshall and apparently telegraphed at the same time to the French Government.

4. Immediately on receipt of Commandant Sciard's complaint, General Marshall hastened to explain to him the routine character of the order, its preliminary nature and the necessity for its early issue owing to congestion of shipping. In order to remove all suspicion of undue haste, the order was formally cancelled and Commandant Sciard informed. In addition to this, General Marshall's Chief of the Staff tendered his personal apology to Commandant Sciard and told him that it was fully realised that instructions must be awaited from the War Office, who would naturally consult the French Government, before any final action was taken. Commandant Sciard expressed himself fully satisfied, and on the 11th January asked permission for two cypher telegrams to be sent "Clear the line" to Paris. Accompanying his request was a note stating that these telegrams were intended to neutralise one which he had sent thirty-six hours before. He explained verbally that his first telegram might have created the impression that his departure was being unduly hurried, and that he wished to remove that impression.

5. In the light of the above explanation, I feel sure that the French Government will agree that the allegation of unfriendly conduct towards Commandant Sciard on the part of the British officials concerned is entirely unfounded. Every possible step was taken by General Marshall to remove at once the false impression created by the publication of a purely routine order, and I can only assume that the two later telegrams despatched by Commandant Sciard were either not received by the French Government, or, through some regrettable oversight, were not communicated to M. de Fleuriau.

6. I venture to express the hope that this incident will convince your Excellency of the fact that His Majesty's Government and the British military authorities in Mesopotamia attach the highest importance to the preservation of cordial relations between our two Governments, and that every effort is being made to ensure this result both in Mesopotamia and in other spheres in which both British and French interests are, by the exigencies of the military situation, temporarily confided to the hands of the British military authorities.

I have, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

Enclosure 2 in No. 7.

Joint Allied Note presented to Turkish Government.

EN se référant à leur note collective du 19 janvier 1919, les Hauts-Commissaires des trois Puissances alliées estiment opportun de signifier à la Sublime Porte qu'il doit être bien entendu qu'aussi les sujets belges, hellènes, monténégrins, roumains et serbes gardent la plénitude des droits que les traités de leurs pays respectifs leur garantissaient avec l'Empire ottoman en fait de régime capitulaire.

Le Gouvernement ottoman est par conséquent tenu à donner des ordres immédiats afin qu'il cesse toute application aux sujets desdits États des mesures qui tirent leur origine des lois, décrets et règlements substitués au régime capitulaire depuis 1914.

Constantinople, le 30 janvier 1919.

[30458/ME 44]

No. 8.

Political Resident, Aden, to Earl Curzon.—(Received February 24.)

(C. 1.)

Sir,

Aden, February 6, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, three copies of the first Aden news letter, dated the 5th February, 1919, to His Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner, Cairo.

I have, &c.

J. M. STEWART, *Major-General.*

Enclosure in No. 8.

First Aden News Letter.

Political Resident, Aden, to High Commissioner, Cairo.

(Secret.)

Dear Sir Reginald Wingate,

Aden, February 5, 1919.

Imam.

NEWS has been brought in to the effect that the imam proclaimed to the sheikhs who had gathered at Sanaa in compliance with the imam's invitation, that there was written in one of their religious books that the English would one day occupy and retain Sanaa for either seven days, seven months, or seven years, and that he feared the time for the fulfilment of the prophecy had now come, but that they should not fear, for he was already in communication with the English authorities in Aden.

2. Another report is that sent in by Syed Mahomed Taha, our correspondent at Jabel Jihaf. It is said that the imam summoned all the Yemen sheikhs and in their presence asked certain Jews to become Muslims, but the latter refused. Thereupon the imam contrasted the religious zeal of the Jews with the greed of the sheikhs for gold from the Idrisi and the British Government. He then asked the sheikhs to join him in the name of religion, and the latter agreed to do so. The same correspondent has sent in a letter addressed to him by a Turkish official who signs himself as Amin-es-Somdooi, treasurer at Kataba. The writer states that he has received orders from Sanaa and the Mutasarif of Taiz to provide 500 kadabs of rations for 500 soldiers expected to arrive at Kataba, and also for another force of 6,000 mujahidins who are proceeding to the well-known place [sic]. The writer expects that Dala and Jabel Jihaf will be again under the administration of Kataba. This report is no doubt vastly exaggerated.

3. The Abdali Sultan sent three agents to the Yemen to get first-hand news of what is going on there. They have now returned, and report that on learning of the arrangement of armistice the imam summoned all the head sheikhs of the Yemen, and in the presence of the Governor, who had come there at the invitation of the imam, asked them to sign a document recognising the imam as their protector and

suzerain, and the Lower Yemen as a dependency of the Zeidi domain. The sheikhs feared the imam, especially as the Turkish Government was now powerless and were compelled to sign it, but they refused to give hostages. The imam then sent them back with 200 Zeidi soldiers with each of them to collect tithes. The sheikhs directly they had returned to their homes wrote to Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil, offering him their support. The agents confirm the report about the despatch of Zeidi troops to Kataba, Dala, and Jabel Jihaf. They say that the imam has secured all the Turkish war material in Sanaa and has asked for the return of those at Ibb and other places. The agents also say that all the people in the Yemen are expecting letters from the Abdali Sultan or the British Government, and that if British troops are moved as far as the borders all the sheikhs are ready to make submission. The agents have heard that Syed Ahmed Pasha of Taiz has informed the imam, that Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil is trying to form a friendship with the British. The Abdali agents assert that the Lower Yemen will never recognise the imam, and give an instance of Ahl Sabar, who lately refused to allow Zeidis who were sent by the imam with Mansoor-bin-Ali Pasha to enter their country.

4. It is reported that the imam has publicly declared his refusal to surrender the Turks, and that the imam and Wali (Governor) Mahmood Nadim have agreed between them that the imam should assume command of the forces and that the Wali should be Civil Governor.

5. The Abdali Sultan has sent in a letter he has received from the Haushabi Sultan, who writes that a force of 400 Turks and Zeids with guns and machine-guns and 1,000 camels and mules each is collected at Al Ariba and Al Sayani in the Haushabi country under the imam's lieutenant, Sef-al-Islam, and that another large force is at Ibb. He is asking the Abdali to endeavour to get British to move up to Al Dareja. The number of the force under Sef-al-Islam, as given by another informant, is only 500 men.

6. Reports about the number of Zeidi troops across the border vary a great deal. The latest report from one of the agents of the Political Officer, Lahej Column, states that Abdul Wasi Noman was accompanied by 600 men, 400 have gone towards Mawai and 70 have arrived at Kataba. Amir Nasr is said to be at Saddah with a force, the number of which is not known, and his intention is to march on to Jabel Jihaf and Dala.

7. Judging from all these reports, there is no doubt that the imam is making preparations to take over what the Turks have left. If he does this and is successful he will come down to our old borders. There is no boundary line now that the Turks have gone, as the line delimited was between us and them. At the same time, I do not think the imam has any designs on our protectorate. We can only await the result of the return of the envoys, and we shall more clearly discern the imam's mind.

8. The imam has written to the Abdali Sultan expressing his pleasure at the latter's return to Lahej. In this letter he praises the British Government, and wants to know from Abdali how we are disposed towards him (the imam).

9. The Political Officer, Lahej Column, has learnt that Ismail Effendi-el-Aswad has received orders to hand over the treasury and ordnance at Taiz to Sef-el-Islam, Saiyid Ahmad-bin-Qassim, but that Ismail has refused obedience to this order, and proposes to defy the Sef-el-Islam. He is being supported by Said Ahmad Pasha. Commenting on this last news, the Political Officer, Lahej Column, states that it is hardly worth believing unless Said Ahmad Pasha has also turned anti-imam. He is a Shafai himself, but represented the imam's interests in Taiz. Read in confirmation with the general Shafai feeling towards the imam the event is likely enough, but it is extremely doubtful whether the feeling is genuine, and not due to the intrigues of a few ambitious persons. Since then it has been reported that Ismail Effendi-el-Aswal is at Mawia with 300 Turks and some guns. I have written to Sheikh Mohamed Nasir Mukbil to facilitate the departure of this force to Aden. The Political Officer has received a report that grain is being collected in Kataba by the orders of the imam. There is said to be no big force at that place, but presumably the preparations are meant to serve as a reserve later on.

Mawia.

10. Abdali agents give the number of guns in Mawia as follows:—

3 guns brought from Dala.

5 guns, 2 machine-guns, 1 brass gun brought from Lahej.

There are also 25 Turks, 20 Somalis and 8 Indians (our deserters). Some of the Turks who endeavoured to escape were stopped, as Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil requires them as gunners in case there should be trouble between him and the imam. I have written to Mahomed Nasir Mukbil to send the Indians to Aden.

Imam and Mawia.

11. Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil, before he came to Aden, sent to General Beatty some telegrams purporting to emanate from the imam and the mutessarif of Taiz to his address, in which both the imam and the mutessarif strongly condemn the action of Saeed Pasha in surrendering to us and praise Mahomed Nasir, and ask him to keep himself thoroughly prepared apparently for a fresh advance on Lahej. The mutessarif says that orders have been issued to form a column of all the available forces in the Kada of Zabid and the Liwa of Taiz, and to place it under the command of Colonel Mahomed Nadim Bey, who will also be in command in Bab-el-Maudeb until the return of Colonel Hakki Bey; as he is responsible for watching the movements of the enemy from Lahej to Kamaira, orders have been issued to the Commandant of the Kamaira detachment to confer with Mahomed Nasir Mukbil and to collect and mobilise warriors. The mutessarif appeals to the religious zeal and patriotism of Mahomed Nasir to do everything necessary for guarding and protecting the country, &c. The imam states that he has heard of the intention of some Turkish officials and soldiers to flee (apparently to Aden). He therefore warns Mahomed Nasir strictly to police the roads and send back to him any Turks who may be found going without his or the Government's permission. I have given the gist of the telegrams for what it is worth, but there is no guarantee that they are authentic.

Hajariya.

12. The Political Officer, Lahej Column, reports on the 4th January, 1919, that Abdul Wasi Noman, Kaïmakam of Hajariya, who had been on a visit to the imam, is now on his way back to his Kaïmakamate with a mixed Turkish and Zeidi force under one Enver Bey, the ultimate destination of which is said to be Lahej.

13. A messenger from Abdul Wahab Noman, brother of Abdul Wasi, and his nephew, Mahomed Ahmad Noman, came and saw the Abdali sultan and the Political Officer, Lahej Column. The messenger did not bring any letter, but stated that both Abdul Wahab Noman and his nephew were antagonistic to Abdul Wasi and wish to overthrow him if countenanced by the British Government and Abdali sultan. The sultan told him that they should either write or come in personally.

14. The Abdali sultan has sent in a letter brought to him personally by the principal sheikh of the A'abus, Sheikh Ali Abdul Rab, to whom it is addressed by the Kaïmakam of Hajariya, Abdul Wahab Noman, in which the latter rebukes the Absi sheikh for failing to go to him and having gone to the Christians (*sic*), and adds that "to declare a jihad against you becomes more due than the jihad against them." The authenticity of this letter is doubtful. A'abus is in Hajariya, but the sheikh has always been friendly with the Abdali House and supplied the Abdali sultan with news during this war.

Amiri.

15. Amir Nasr's brother, Ali Shaif, who was a hostage with the imam, is reported to have been released and arrived at Dala.

16. As regards Amir Wasr of Dala, the Political Officer, Lahej Column, reports that the consensus of tribal opinion is against his being recognised, and that Government decision in this respect will be hailed by the people with satisfaction; that some people are in favour of Amir Nasr's cousin, Amir Abdulla-bin-Abdul Kawi, who has been for three years a refugee in Aden, and who is now being advised to return to Dala. One Haj Mahomed Saleh of Dala (a merchant), well known to Colonel Jacob, was interviewed by him on the 25th January, 1919. Haj Mahomed said that Amir Nasr was pro-imam at present because he had a bad conscience; he was a tyrant. His brothers, he said, were useless, except the youngest one, Ali-bin-Shaif, who was the best man amongst them and was just. Another possible candidate, he said, was Amir Abdulla-bin-Abdul Kawi, now in Aden. In fact Haj Mahomed thought the Amiris would accept any amir the British Government desired. Haj Mahomed remarked that the Turks and their tool, Ibn Nasir Mukbil, had ruined the country. He added that there was much distress on the Dala plateau on account of scanty rain last year, and many people died of hunger and fever.

17. The Amiri tribe have been informed through the Abdali sultan that if they wish to regain the favour of Government they must depose Amir Nasr and choose a new ruler.

18. Sheikh Saleh Abdul Habib, Hajili, Belad, Radjain, Wadi Tame, wrote to me professing friendship and offering camels and stores, and also asking for permission to come in to Aden. He was thanked, but was not allowed to come in. With reference to the fight between Amir Abdul Hamid and Haj Ahmed (an Amiri sheikh of Al Hussein), the Political Officer, Lahej Column, states that it is now reported that the amir received a reinforcement of over 200 men from Mures, and succeeded in ousting Haj Ahmad from his stronghold in Hussein. Haj Ahmad is stated to have fled to Khoraiha. The casualties on his side were three killed and eight wounded.

Mokha.

19. The Political Officer, Lahej Column, writes that Ali Othman, Kaïmakam of Mokha, has informed Sultan of Lahej that he has Turkish rifles and ammunition, five guns, about fifty mules, and some camels left behind by the Turks, and has asked for orders. The Kaïmakam does not wish to hand them over to the imam, and desires being kept on in his present position in recognition of his services. The Abdali sultan has sent the Kaïmakam's messenger to Aden. The messenger is being told that the munitions, &c., should be given up to us through Sheikh Said. But I doubt whether the message, which is only a verbal one, is genuine.

Mures.

20. Sheikh Saleh Mohsin Askar Ali, Nakib of Mausata (Upper Yafa), confirms the news re the movement of the Zeidi troops, &c. He recommends the Mures sheikh (outside our border), who has written to us offering friendship, to our favour. I have acknowledged this letter, but have given no further encouragement.

Hodeida.

21. The Political Officer at Hodeida reported that a party, including liberated British subjects and others, arrived in Hodeida on the 16th January, 1919, escorted by Elias Bey, the Sheikh of Bajil and Kuhra and the Syed of Merawa. Elias Bey conferred with Captain Subhi, the Turkish envoy from Constantinople, who arrived in Hodeida on the morning of the 13th January. Later Abdul Razzak came in from Zavia. Captain Subhi explained the political situation to him and handed to him for transmission to Tewfik Pasha the letter which he had brought from the Minister of War at Constantinople. Elias Bey and Abdul Razzak, with the sheikhs and syed, left for Zavia in the evening. The prisoners have since been brought to Aden in a Government vessel. They were 92 in all, and included 6 European British subjects and 62 Indian British subjects. I am attaching extracts from written statements given to me by some of these prisoners, namely, Messrs. Bakewell, Lodge, Cowdray and Van Ham (a Dutchman). They also brought letters purporting to be from (1) Tewfik Pasha, (2) Mahmud Nadim (the Governor) and (3) the imam. No. 1 is marked "Private" and signed "B," and attributes the delay in complying with the armistice terms to Mahmud Nadim, who is stated to have instigated the imam not to allow the Turks to leave, and to have given orders to renew hostilities against us, which orders the Commander-in-chief refused to obey. No. 2. The Governor makes the want of money the reason for non-compliance with the armistice terms, and asks for money from Constantinople. No. 3 is a friendly letter. The imam states that the British prisoners will represent to me the esteem in which his administration is held in Yemen, &c. One of the informants of the Political Officer, Hodeida, reported to him that he inferred from conversations he had with Sheikhs Abu Hadi and Ismail Bazawi during their visit to Hodeida on the 14th January, 1919, that the Turks had deceived them, and that they had not understood the real facts of the political situation till they came there. They said that henceforth we may consider the tribesmen under their leadership as allies and friends of the British Government and willing to act under our orders. They further promised to undertake to preserve peace and order in the Zohra country, and to bring the various sheikhs and akils under our authority. These sheikhs were responsible for detention of the prisoners for some days at Bajil. The same informant learnt that on the 13th January, 1919, at Marawa, a Turkish officer, Major Salim Effendi, accompanied by Sheikh Suleiman Bukeib, certain sayeds of Marawa, and a number of population visited the tomb of the Sailat Ali bin Umr Al Ahdal and offered prayers for the success of the Turkish arms, and said that they were awaiting the

orders of Colonel Ghalib Bey to make an attack on Hodeida. This ceremony has caused great consternation among Hodeida merchants now residing in Marawa. The same correspondent learnt that some days ago Ghalib Bey assembled his officers at Zaidia, and in a speech informed them that he did not believe the stories current about an armistice with the British, and that he did not intend to obey the orders of the Commander-in-chief or the Vali in this connection. He thereupon called on his officers to join him in a fight to the death. In reply they agreed to follow him. The following details were gleaned by the Political Officer, Hodeida, from an interview with Mohamed Shavish Zeidi, who accompanied the imam's representative, the Kadi Ahmed Mujjahid, in charge of British prisoners from Sanaa to Hodeida:—

(1.) He was instructed by Ghalib-ez-Zaidi, a man of some influence in Sanaa, to inform our agent, Hassan Kanjoni, that he and a great part of the merchants and influential men in Sanaa, including the house of Syed Abdul Kadir, the mayor of the town, are in favour of the British, and opposed to the imam and the Vali Mahmud Nedim.

(2.) Whilst at Dhamar he was informed that most of the sheikhs and the syeds there were anti-imam and in favour of the British.

22. Some of the Zaranik sheikhs wrote to me some time ago asking for permission to come to Aden to see me. This was before our occupation of Hodeida. I have sent them a polite reply declining, but I have advised them to keep themselves in touch with our officers at Hodeida.

Haushabi.

23. A fight is reported to have taken place between Sultan Ali Mana, the Haushabi and the Humedi (Subehis). The latter carried away one of the sultan's bullocks, and subsequently came to beg for pardon. Ali Mana tried to lock them up, but the Subehis resisted and lost two men killed in the skirmish. This is said to have happened about the 20th January, 1919. A later report states that the parties are busy collecting men for a fight. As stated in my last letter, Colonel Jacob interviewed the Haushabi sultan at Lahej, and his notes are embodied in his memorandum on "Our attitude after the war within our protectorate." The Haushabi then came to me in Aden and asked for pardon. He was told that his case would be considered. His case is not on all fours with the other chiefs who had gone over to the Turks, as the latter, when advancing on Lahej, had to pass through his country, and the sultan was forced to join them. He has now made submission to the Abdali, and promised to return to him his gun which had fallen to the Haushabi with his share in the looting of Lahej in July 1915. I have asked the Abdali to come to Aden and to bring with him the Haushabi in order to renew the agreements existing between them before the war.

Subehi.

24. I have also asked the Abdali to bring at the same time some of the Subehi sheikhs in order to discuss and settle the Subehi questions. I proposed to renew the 1881 agreement with the Abdali, under which the latter assumed responsibility for the Subehi tribe. The present Abdali sultan has expressed his willingness to renew the agreement under modified conditions. This measure is advisable in order to safeguard the trade routes which are at present unsafe owing to the depredations of the Subehis.

Abdali.

25. The report in my last letter respecting the Mansab of Waht has now been confirmed, but it appears that he did not flee to Hujjaria but to Mawia, which he has since left for Ibb, for fear that Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil, who has been in correspondence with us, might hand him over to us.

Fadli.

26. The Fadli Sultan's son, Abdulla-bin-Hussein, applied to me as well as through the Political Officer, Lahej Column, for permission to come in to Aden to see me, but was refused.

Mokalla.

27. As reported officially in my letter No. C-52, dated the 16th January, 1919, Captain Lee-Warner left for Mokalla on the 13th January. I have since received a

letter from the Sultan of Shehr and Mokalla, in which he says that Captain Lee-Warner has made up his mind to proceed to the Hadramaut, and that he will make the necessary arrangements with regard to his journey. The sultan is very pleased with the present of the oil samples (*vide* your letter No. 283-M, dated the 10th October, 1918).

Balahaf.

28. The Wahidi Sultan Mohsin-bin-Saleh, of Balahaf, died on the 5th January, 1919, and his two sons, Abdulla-bin-Mohsin and Ali-bin-Mohsin, who have been given commissions in the 1st Yemen Infantry, are returning home from Aden in a few days. The election of a successor has not yet taken place.

Imam and Mawia.

29. As officially reported to you (*vide* my letter No. C-75, dated the 23rd January, 1919), Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil, of Mawia, who visited me in Aden, was assured that his interests in this particular tract would be safeguarded by the British Government in whatever settlement was eventually decided on. The latest report sent in by the Political Officer, Lahej Column, states that Mahomed Nasir is now coming to terms with the Imam.

Yours, &c.
J. M. STEWART.

Enclosure 2 in No. 8.

Extracts from Written Statements given to the Political Resident, Aden, by the European British Prisoners of War with the Turks.

In the vilayet of Yemen no massacre of Christians or others has taken place. They have been financially exploited, and some have been imprisoned, but no one has been killed. There are many disciples of the school of massacre in the Yemen, but the vali has kept order and protected the foreign subjects from maltreatment.

The Imam stated that he was personally free from all fanaticism and hatred of peoples of other religions than Muslim, but that he was surrounded by Saids and others who did not share his feelings. He wishes to develop his country on the lines of Egypt, which he had heard about, but the development must necessarily be of a slow nature owing to the backward state of his people. He urged his claims to the greater part of the Yemen, as his ancestors had at one time dominated the whole; he had not been conquered by the Turks, but had merely had an alliance with them, and as they were leaving he expected that his original boundaries would be recognised, and that parts of the country, even those which he could not now dominate, would not be handed over to other native chiefs.

As far as we are able to judge from our more or less restricted surroundings, a great part of the country as far as Sanaa would welcome any foreign Government. The imam's rule, even among his own people, is not popular. The great mass of people desire an open sea and safe roads—who rules them they are more or less indifferent about, so long as these points are obtained. The Tehama people and the inhabitants of the mountain ranges nearer to the sea are almost, without exception, anti-Imam. In all probability a small military force could march as far as Menekha, the key of the coast ridge behind Hodeida, without any opposition. The Beni Moukatel, Beni Yaber and Beni Saafan tribes are all said to be anxious to help British occupation. The imam cannot get soldiers, or hold them for long, because he will not pay; even saids in his own household are looking for outside employment because they cannot support themselves on their pay.

The Yemen Arab's religion is money; with that, even in small sums, everything and anything can be done.

The state of the country is now more than unsettled, the civil and military authorities are in disagreement on almost every point, although they do not show it very openly.

[18736/W 44]

No. 9.

Earl Curzon to Mr. Balfour (Paris).

(No. 424.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 7, 1919.

IN reply to your despatch No. 31 of the 1st instant relative to the re-establishment of the Capitulations in Turkey, I have the honour to inform you that the only instructions issued by this Department to Admiral Calthorpe are contained in Foreign Office telegram No. 86 of the 13th ultimo, copy of which is enclosed herewith for convenience of reference, and that no other action has been taken in this matter.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[34795/ME 44]

No. 10.

Political Resident, Aden, to Earl Curzon.—(Received March 4.)

(No. C. 2. Secret.)

Sir,

Aden, February 14, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, three copies of the second Aden news letter, dated the 14th February, 1919, to his Excellency the High Commissioner, Cairo.

I have, &c.

J. M. STEWART, Major-General.

Enclosure in No. 10.

Second Aden News Letter.

Political Resident, Aden, to High Commissioner, Cairo.

(Secret.)

Dear Sir Reginald Wingate,

Aden, February 14, 1919.

Imamic.

The Political Agent, Lahej Column, reports that he had a talk with a number of people coming from Mawia and Taiz. They nearly all were against being ruled by the imam, but were unanimous in declaring that the Shafais were weak and unable to resist the imam's rule if the latter chose to force it on them. The predominant idea seems to be that every muqaddam, akil, or sheikh should be independent. The people referred to stated that they would prefer being ruled by the Turks, whose exit from the Yemen they regretted, rather than by the imam or Mahomed Nasir or any local chief.

2. According to one of the informants of the Political Officer, Lahej Column, there has been a dispute between Sef-el-Islam (imam's lieutenant), who has gone to Ibb to take charge of Turkish war materials there, and Ba Salama. The informant says that the Shafais are determined to oppose the Zeidis.

3. The principal Sheikh of Tariqa Shadlia, Mahomed Hassan Abu-al-Ghait, writes to this residency that Ismail Effendi "el Aswad," commanding troops at Taiz, has refused to surrender the magazine and guns to Sef-el-Islam, who has been sent there by the imam in order to take over charge of them. The writer adds that in case of a fight between them, the Shafais will badly require our active support.

4. An authentic report from the interior gives the number of Turkish officers and men in Taiz who have received orders to proceed to Sheikh Said to surrender themselves at Perim, as 400.

5. The Political Officer, Lahej Column, reports the arrival of messengers with letters from certain twelve sheikhs of different tribes in the Yemen who wish to place themselves under British protection. The Political Officer gathered from the messengers that all these sheikhs were summoned by the imam to render allegiance, among a horde of others who joined him, but that these twelve sheikhs preferred to place themselves under the British, as the latter would pay them stipends and make

them independent within their own territories, whereas the imam would make them pay him tithes.

6. Ba Salama Rais-el-Beladieh of Ibb has made overtures for friendly relations with Government, but he is not being encouraged.

7. The Zeidis are reported to be robbing the people in Taiz. About 200 Zeidis are said to have arrived in Mawia, but the presence of Turks there is keeping their activities in check.

The present Zeidi force in the Lower Yemen is reported to be as follows:—

Taiz, 600 men under Sef-el-Islam.
Ibb, 200 men.
Mawia, 200 men.
Hujjaria, 200 men.

Mawia and Imamic.

8. From the news received through the Abdali Sultan, which has been confirmed by the Political Officer, Lahej Column, it appears that on his return home from Aden Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil received letters from the imam guaranteeing to him that no Zeidis will enter his limits and that Mahomed Nasir Mukbil, will administer his country. Mahomed Nasir Mukbil, who has written to me and the Abdali after his return to Mawai, does not mention anything about the receipt of the imam's letters; on the contrary, he states that on his return he found that the Zeidis had encroached upon his borders and that he had to drive them away.

9. Mahomed Nasir says that he is endeavouring to get the Turks in the Liwa of Taiz to surrender to us. Ismail Effendi, with 300 men and a number of officers with their families, is reported to have arrived at Mawia. They are said to have brought with them four guns, three of which are machine-guns, ammunition being left in Taiz. I have written to Sheikh Mahomed Nasir urging him to facilitate their coming to Aden. Later reports, however, state that he is endeavouring to retain them to promote his own interests, and I am addressing a second and stronger letter to him on this subject.

10. It is reported that three of Mahomed Nasir's vassal sheikhs, Bin Huraish, Najee Saleh-al-Fattahi and Kahtan-al-Shamiri had rebelled against Mahomed Nasir, but they were promptly dealt with the help of the Turks under Ismail Effendi, who arrived in Mawia in time.

11. Two of the above sheikhs, Najee and Kahtan have written to the Abdali sultan declaring that as they are now free from the Turkish yoke, they will not place themselves under anyone, except the Abdali, as they know that the Abdali's Government (i.e., the British) is just. They stigmatise Mahomed Nasir as infamous, and say that he was the cause of the Abdali and their own ruin during the reign of the Turks.

Amiri.

12. From the further account brought by the agent of the Political Officer, Lahej Column, it appears that the fight between the Amir's brother, Abdul Hamid, and Maji Ahmad is still going on, and Abdul Hamid has established his headquarters at Khober. The latter has with him eighty Zeidis and one gun.

Hujjaria.

13. A Hujjaria sheikh, Abdurrah-al-Mimari, of Beni Omer, came in with a recommendatory letter from Sheikh Mahomed Nasir and Mahomed Hasson, of the Tarika Shadeliya. He was interviewed by Major Reilly. He wants, like the rest of them, to establish his independence and to be in direct relations with us. He is being sent away with a present.

Hashid and Bakil.

14. Two messengers have come in with letters from Hashid and Bakil sheikhs. They were interviewed by Major Reilly. They say that the sheikhs from whom they have brought the letters are all in the Samara and Makhadar districts and to the east of them and in Udain. They want to come into direct relations with Government, but if Government does not desire this, they will go back. They do not want to be under the imam because they live amongst Shafais, and from ancient times they have been independent of the imams. The messengers say that although the Hashid and

Bakil are Zeidis they live in friendship with Shafais and are not prejudiced by religious differences.

The messengers were told that the views of the Hashid and Bakil were already known to Government, who had the whole question of the future of the Yemen under consideration, &c.

15. The surrenders of the Turkish garrisons in Asir and Yemen are proceeding satisfactorily in the first case, slowly in the second.

The numbers surrendered up to date are 390 officers, 5,467 men, and 276 civilians, women and children.

It is estimated that 3,100 of all ranks remain to be evacuated.

Yours, &c.

J. M. STEWART.

[34957/ME 58]

No. 11.

Director of Military Intelligence to Foreign Office.—(Received March 4.)

THE Director of Military Intelligence presents his compliments to the Acting Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and begs to transmit herewith, for Sir Ronald Graham's information, copy of a report on the Georgian Government by Major McDonnell, received from General Headquarters, Constantinople.

War Office, March 3, 1919.

Enclosure in No. 11.

Report on the Georgian Government by Major McDonnell.

THE following are the names of the members of the present Government at Tiflis:—

Prime Minister	...	M. Jordani (Social Democrat).
Foreign Affairs	...	M. Gegechkori (Social Democrat).
Interior	...	M. Ramishwilli (Social Democrat, Labour).
Finance and Trade	...	M. Jurilli (National Democrat).
War	...	M. Georgadzi (Social Democrat).
Education	...	M. Lorkashashwilli (Federalist).
Supplies	...	M. Ardashwilli (Non-Party).
Ways and Means	...	M. Lorkepiandze (Social Revolutionary).
Justice	...	M. Iev Meskiev (Federalist).
Lands and Agriculture	...	M. Homeriki (Social Democrat).
President of the Parliament	...	M. Cheidzi (Social Revolutionary).

Nominally democratic, the Government is really entirely in the hands of the advanced Socialist Party in the Parliament, who have gained very considerable popularity with the labouring and peasant classes. The actual members of the Council of Ministers are not true Georgians, but either Emeritins or Mongralians, and this causes a certain amount of discontent among the true Georgians. The methods and ethics of the Government are ultra-socialistic. Land has already been nationalised, and railways and all public institutions are to be nationalised during the early part of this year.

The Georgian Government maintains:—

1. That they are already actually an established and independent State.
2. That no decision of any outside Power or Peace Conference can alter the fact of their independence.
3. That their boundaries are fixed by the history of their nation.
4. That all property and institutions at present within the boundaries of historical Georgia belong to the Georgian Republic.
5. That they are perfectly able to maintain order within their boundaries, and in this respect require no help from outside.

1. The actual establishment of the present Georgian Republic came about with the advent of the German troops. M. Gegechkori, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, states that he, as a representative of the then Tiflis Commissariate, applied to Colonel Pike, the representative of the British Mission in Tiflis, for British or Allied assistance in troops and finance, in order to keep the Turk out of Georgia and to establish Georgian independence. On being informed that this was impossible, the Tiflis Commissariate accepted Germany's offer and M. Gegechkori left the Government. He subsequently returned to office on the 4th December, when news of armistice and the removal of the Turk and German from the Caucasus was confirmed.

2. Their apparent conviction that nothing can alter the fact of their independence is based on statements of Mr. Lloyd George and President Wilson regarding the independence and self-determination of other small nations, and our own support of the rights of the Armenian people. This conviction makes arguments as to their attitude towards various questions almost impossible. Statements made by our own Labour Party are constantly brought to bear when discussing their actions, and the probability of these prejudicing their claims to future independence.

3. Disputes between the Georgians and their neighbours are bound to arise over historical boundaries. Vast tracts of lands were originally owned by the Georgian aristocracy. These people in many cases found that Armenian and Mussulman labour was cheaper and more industrious than their own people; large tracts of land therefore gradually became populated with Armenians and Mussulmans. Added to which tribes were continually invading the country; and further, after the conquest of the Caucasus, the Russian Government did everything to encourage colonisation by the Armenian and Tartar tribes. The Georgian aristocracy, who are a pleasure-seeking and lazy people, later fell into debt to these colonists and mortgaged or sold them their lands. Consequently large tracts of historic Georgia are now actually populated with a preponderance of Armenians or Tartars, and in many cases these people actually hold the lands. The Georgians now claim that these historic lands should be included in their territories, while the Armenians or Tartars, fearing the advanced socialism and nationalisation of lands by the Georgians, claim the right of the majority to settle their destinies, and are willing to fight for their lands.

4. That all property on Georgian territory belongs to the Georgian Republic is a source of endless dispute between the Georgians and the Russians, the latter maintaining that railways and institutions built up entirely on Russian money cannot be considered as the property of Georgia. The same applies to the large quantity of military stores and material supplied for the Russian armies on the Caucasian front and at present in the hands of Georgia.

5. That the Georgian Government is able to maintain order within its boundaries seems to be more or less correct, and compared with the rest of Russia order exists. German troops have done much to establish this, although they never seem to have been used except for the moral effect of their presence. The Government maintain that the social reforms and nationalisation of the land did much to establish order and check Bolshevik propaganda. The German troops were under contract to support the Government or risk an infringement of the contract, which meant the loss of trade concessions to Germany. The reactionary element is very weak in Georgia, and led by an indolent aristocracy.

The Prime Minister, M. Jordani, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs are undoubtedly the soundest elements in the Government. They are both former members of the old Russian Duma, men of enlightenment and high education, and more democratic than socialist. They are, however, almost entirely in the hands of the ultra-socialistic elements, which are led by Cheidzi and Ramishwilli, with Tseritillie in the background. Open support of Jordani and Gegechkori, with a fixed policy and strong guiding hand on the part of the Allies, would probably have the effect of establishing a feeling of strength and confidence among the followers of the democratic element, and enable Messrs. Jordani, Gegechkori and company to check the extreme socialistic left party. Even the most violent monarchists are rightly of the opinion that a change of Government at the present time might lead to fatal results, and place the country entirely in the hands of the ultra-socialists, and even perhaps the Bolsheviks. It seems an established fact that certain members of the Parliament, if not actually members of the Government, have been flirting with the Bolsheviks at Vladikavkas, and many of the infantry regiments are ready at any moment to throw in their lot with the Bolsheviks. One of the reasons of this is the close proximity of Denikin and his army. The Socialists openly state that rather than

run the risk of conquest by Denikin and a Russian Monarchy they would rather hand over the country to the Bolsheviks.

Anti-Russian Feeling.—This is most extraordinarily strongly marked in all parties. On the one hand are the Russian Bolsheviks' pretensions to Georgia and on the other Denikin and his Monarchists, and the fact that every Russian looks upon the Caucasus as a part of the Russian Empire. Russians are badly treated and looked upon with great suspicion.

Anti-British Feeling.—There is a feeling of distrust towards us more than dislike. Every Socialist naturally distrusts the British and looks upon us as Imperialists. They cannot imagine that we have not come to stay in one form or another. The Georgian Nationalist cannot fathom our policy, and states that he cannot understand a policy which presumably aims at supporting the claims of small people, among whom Georgia should be included, yet at the same time supports Denikin, his volunteer army, the Czecho-Slavs, the Ufa Government, Koltchak, all of whom have the main object of re-establishing a Russian Empire within her former boundaries.

Armenian Question.—The whole of this question is far too complicated and involved to be dealt with in this report. As far as concerns the limits of this report, the Armenians and the Georgians, who for centuries have lived together more or less amicably, are now practically in a state of war, actual hostilities having only ceased last night at midnight. The ostensible *casus belli* arose over a disputed portion of the Borchalinsk Province. This district, known as the Lorinsky Okrug, has for the past year been occupied by the Turk. At first much friction took place between the Armenian peasant and the Georgian militia, and eventually ended in open hostilities and war being declared. It is difficult to state who actually took the initiative, but, judging by the preparedness of the Armenians and the fact that during the first week they practically conquered the whole of the Borchalinsk Province, the general vote is cast in favour of the Armenians having commenced. The Armenians now lay claim to the neighbouring province of Akhalkalik on the plea that the greater number of the inhabitants are of Armenian nationality (*vide* note 3 to this report, p. 16).

It seems more probable that the Armenian Government at Erivan were as much against a breach of the peace as was the Georgian Government at Tiflis. The Armenian people undoubtedly realise, much more than does the Georgian Government, that their destiny and territorial aspirations do not depend upon themselves, but will eventually be settled by the Powers of Europe. An open conflict between the two people might easily have been avoided, but apparently other elements were at work behind the scenes. This may be judged from the following notes:—

1. As mentioned above, for some time past the treatment meted out to the Russians by the Georgian Government is little short of persecution, and the followers of Denikin are now the avowed enemies of the present Georgian Government.

2. Most of the Russian officers resident in Tiflis, formerly by no means pro-Armenian, are now openly sympathising with the Armenians.

3. The Armenian army is to a great extent officered by regular officers, most of them followers of Denikin. These people call the Armenian army the 9th Denikin Army, and service with it counts as service in the volunteer army.

4. On the 27th December, according to authoritative information, the Georgian Government learnt that certain members of Denikin's staff strongly advocated attacking Georgia with a view to occupation of the province of Sochi, which for some time past has been in dispute between the Russians and the Georgians.

5. Armenian authorities here, when asked to use their influence to stop hostilities, replied that although they were convinced that the Erivan Government would do their utmost to keep the peace, they doubted its power to stop the army.

6. Two months ago, on or about the 1st November, certain Russian and Armenian officers, notably a Colonel Shmagailof, made an attempt to blow up the large railway bridge between Tiflis and Notanebe. Had this been effected, mobilisation and movements of Georgian troops would have been impossible for two or three months. The people concerned in the attempt are Colonel Shmagailof (caught in the act), General Djunkovsky, Lieutenant Alexandrof, General von Reubenau and some Armenians. All these people are Monarchists and followers of Denikin. Of the above, only Shmagailof was caught in the act. The others are suspected owing to their having in their possession large quantities of explosives for which they were unable to account. The charges form two cases and are to be tried separately. Shmagailof has already been tried and condemned to death.

All the accused state that they were acting as British agents at the request of Colonel Pike, then Military Agent in Tiflis and subsequently at Vladikavkas. It is an

established fact, and known to Captain Hulls and certain agents in Tiflis, that these people were in communication with the British Mission at Vladikavkas, and certificates and declarations have been given to that effect in order to endeavour to save the lives of the accused.

The Georgian authorities, however, are convinced (although not denying that the accused acted with the knowledge of the British Mission) that the main object was to paralyse any mobilisation or movements of Georgian troops, and that since the destruction of the bridge could only have assisted the Allies if it had been effected many months before, it is evident that the main object was, that they applied to the British Mission as early as June last and used the British Mission in order to obtain money and assistance for their own scheme, delaying it to suit their own ends until peace in Europe was a foregone conclusion. That the identity of the people concerned in the plot plainly points to a premeditated plan on the part of some of the supporters of Denikin to suit the moment when he and the Armenians should take the offensive against Georgia.

The extreme view of the Armenian question is that there is an agreement between the Volunteer Army of Denikin and the Armenian society known as the Dachnatsoun. What is more probable is that certain individuals composed of groups of officers and members of the Dachnatsoun, seeing that friction was likely to arise between the Georgians and Armenians, have done their utmost to bring about a state of war and are now doing their utmost to complicate matters further. It is evident that members of the Volunteer Army and members of the Dachnatsoun are very deeply concerned in the whole affair.

While touching on the whole Armenian question generally it is to be sincerely hoped that every effort will be made at the Peace Conference in Paris to liquidate once and for all the Armenian political society known as the Dachnatsoun, and that it will be made an international offence against law and order to be a Dachnatsagan, i.e., member of the society. This society, originally started with a view to assisting and helping the Armenian people, is now nothing more than a political society of revenge, and thousands of Armenians themselves will testify to the fact that once this wretched society ceases to exist all political intrigues and consequent troubles and massacres will also cease to exist.

Prince Mugalof and his Aims.—General Prince Mugalof, a Georgian, was formerly in command of the Mussulman Tartar division and took action against the Bolsheviks together with the famous General Patlotsof. He also commanded a brigade against Azerbaijan, but retired his troops directly he heard that the British had arrived in Baku with General Dunsterville.

He has received unofficial consent from the Georgian Government to form a corps to take action against the Bolsheviks in Vladikavkas; one of the conditions is that he undertakes not to interfere with the internal policy of Georgia. He hopes to be able to raise from 10,000 to 20,000 men, mostly of the better classes and the country districts which have as yet been untouched by socialism. He is a supporter of the independence of Georgia in some form or another, but not a Socialist, and is in sympathy with Denikin in his struggle against Bolsheviks.

General Mugalof's representative, Baron Steinhell, is leaving for Ekaterinodar with a view to endeavouring to come to some arrangement with Denikin as to the aims and claims of Georgia and in the hopes of arranging concerted action between Mugalof and Denikin against the common enemy Bolshevik.

Baron Steinhell and General Mugalof wish to interview the British authorities with a view to obtaining support in finance and equipment as the Georgian Government has refused them anything but their moral support.

General Mugalof has considerable influence among the hill tribes and is convinced that the Ingushi, Checheni and Daghestan tribes will also follow him.

The Ingushi.—This tribe inhabit the districts round Vladikavkas and have now declared their readiness to take action against the Bolsheviks. The chiefs declare that they can put into the field from 10,000 to 15,000 men, all used to carrying arms.

As a people they are not very dependable as they lack funds and strong backing. They have existed for years by backing the strongest side, hence their wavering policy, one day Bolshevik and the next against them. They are courageous and good fighters, but owing to their geographical situation require to realise that they are strongly backed. In this respect our support of Mugalof would be invaluable. Once the Ingushi and other tribes felt that Mugalof's detachment was strongly backed by the Allies there would be no doubt as to their loyalty. To ensure this finance and a strong detachment of British troops at Kazbek is undoubtedly necessary. These people are all now morally too weak to stand alone

Bolshevism.—It is a mistake to think that because Bolshevism is not seen in the Caucasus that it does not exist. Bolshevism in Tiflis is a very real danger, and their agents are working hard. Both Baku and Tiflis are teeming with them. The virulent form felt up in Russia cannot appear until the armed forces are affected. In Azerbaijan and Baku this is at present practically an impossibility, but in Tiflis it is a real danger. Hence one of the great dangers is a change of the present Government, which is able to hold the army together; the Georgians can mobilise about 30,000 men, and have some 700 Lewis guns sent to the Grand Duke's army in 1917. The Georgian outposts on the Georgian road are known to be fraternising with the Bolsheviks, and should be constantly changed or entirely replaced by foreign troops.

The great mistake made by so many, especially the Russians, is that the combat against Bolshevism merely consists of killing Bolsheviks and conquering the territory they occupy, whereas the fight against Bolshevism is in reality a struggle against an idea or doctrine. It is a doctrine which appeals to the uneducated classes in Russia, of which there are over 80 per cent. of the total population. Bolshevism appeals to them by holding out the achievement of the ideal socialistic state in a minimum of time. Leaders appeal to the baser instincts of the mob, and ply them with paper money which, as long as the Bolshevik state exists, is able to purchase them all they require. Probably the fact that most of the Georgian peasants read and write has done a great deal to save Georgia from the extreme form of Socialism.

General.—To sum up the general situation in Tiflis the following points seem to deserve consideration:—

1. A defined policy on the part of the Allies as to the independence of Georgia and other small States.
2. An agreement with the anti-Socialist elements of Russia whereby they shall for the present confine their energies to fighting Bolshevism, and leave small States, who are able to keep comparative order, to look after themselves, at least until such time as the Paris Conference settles their destinies.
3. Allied support of such elements in Russia as are fighting for the convening of the Executive Assembly, not such elements as wish to force an Emperor on the throne.
4. To maintain the present Government in Georgia, supporting the more democratic elements, and guide the whole into more liberal course, and so discount the extremists.
5. To endeavour to support elements wishing to combat Bolshevism from the north and prevent the Georgian army from becoming infected, and to retain a large and reliable force in Georgia.
6. A settlement of the Armenian question by making them sever connection with all counter-revolutionary elements in Russia, and a complete dissolution of their political societies, especially the Dachnatsoun.

Constantinople, January 27, 1919.

[47768/ME 44]

No. 12.

Rear-Admiral Webb to Earl Curzon.—(Received March 27.)

(No. 297.)

Sir,

Constantinople, March 9, 1919.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 110 of the 3rd February, 1919, I have the honour to forward a copy of a note dated the 15th February from the Turkish Government regarding Capitulations, and a joint reply thereto by the Allied High Commissioners dated the 6th March, 1919.

I have, &c.
(For the High Commissioner),
RICHARD WEBB.

Enclosure 1 in No. 12.

Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs to British High Commissioner.

M. le Vice-Amiral, Constantinople, le 15 février 1919.
J'AI eu l'honneur de recevoir la communication que votre Excellence a bien voulu m'adresser le 19 janvier 1919, relativement au point de vue de son Gouvernement en ce qui concerne l'abrogation des Capitulations.

Les traités et autres accords internationaux en vigueur autrefois entre les deux États ayant été abrogés de plein droit et, *ipso facto*, du fait de la survenance de la guerre, il semble que le moment actuel n'est pas opportun pour envisager la discussion d'une question aussi importante, et qu'il serait plus opportun de l'ajourner jusqu'à la conclusion de la paix.

J'ai l'honneur de relever que les lois, décrets et règlements exceptionnels auxquels les sujets britanniques ont dû être soumis pendant la guerre, ont été récemment abrogés; aussi ces sujets bénéficient-ils actuellement du régime appliqué aux sujets de toute Puissance amie et neutre, ce qui fait qu'ils sont traités conformément aux principes normaux admis par le droit international.

J'aime à espérer que votre Excellence, dans sa juste appréciation des présentes conjonctures, voudra bien partager la manière de voir exposée plus haut.

Veuillez agréer, &c.

M. RECHID.

Enclosure 2 in No. 12.

Allied Note to Turkish Government.

LES Hauts-Commissaires des trois Puissances alliées ont l'honneur de faire observer à la Sublime Porte que l'argumentation contenue dans sa note du 15 février, pèche par la base, l'acte de prétendue abolition des Capitulations étant antérieur à la déclaration de guerre, cet acte ayant d'ailleurs porté atteinte aux droits des neutres comme à ceux des Puissances alliées, et ayant, quand il s'est produit, provoqué les protestations de toutes les Puissances.

En confirmant la demande formulée dans leur note du janvier 1919, les Hauts-Commissaires ajoutent que tout acte ultérieur émanant d'un régime judiciaire et fiscal basé sur la violation des traités pourra provoquer des sanctions immédiates.

AMET.

RICHARD WEBB.

C. SFORZA.

Constantinople, le 6 mars 1919.

[63908/ME 44]

No. 13.

Political Resident, Aden, to Earl Curzon. — (Received April 25.)

(No. C. 3. Secret.)

Sir,

Aden, March 31, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, three copies of the third Aden news letter dated the 31st March, 1919, to his Excellency the High Commissioner, Cairo.

I have, &c.

J. M. STEWART, Major-General.

Enclosure in No. 13.

*Third Aden News Letter.**Political Resident, Aden, to High Commissioner, Cairo.*

(Secret.)

Your Excellency,

Aden, March 31, 1919.

SINCE the despatch of my last letter the surrender of the Turkish forces in Yemen and Asir has been completed, and Mahmud Tewfik Pasha, the Turkish Commander-in-chief in Yemen, is now in Aden. The total numbers surrendered are 714 officers, 9,032 rank and file, 205 civilians and 1,030 women and children.

2. Ismail Effendi, an Abyssinian in the Turkish service, known as "El Aswad," was interviewed by Colonel Jacob before he left for Egypt. Of Mohamed Nasir Mukbil of Mawia, Ismail Effendi said that he had power only when the Turks were there, but now he has no great influence. He is vacillating, not knowing whether to follow the imam or oppose him. He will follow the line of least resistance. In Ismail Effendi's opinion the most influential man in the Yemen of the Shawafi is Mahomed Hassan of the Shadhiliya cult. Ismail Effendi said that he was sent against him several times, but was loath to proceed against this holy man, as he is very much revered by all Shawafi. He is the strongest Shafai he knows; far stronger than Ibn Nasir Mukbil or Syed Ahmed Pasha. The latter, he said, is a shifter with an eye to the main chance. Ismail Effendi considered Imam Yahya to be the strongest imam. Others like Syed Ahmed-bin-Kasim, he said, are far below him, but everyone is up against Imam Yahya by reason of his stinginess. Ismail said that the imam offered him the kaimakamate of Taiz, but he would not stop a moment longer in the Yemen where he had held official posts for twenty years. From reports received from different sources it appears that while he was at Taiz, Ismail received orders from the Commander-in-chief in the Yemen to proceed to Mokha with his men, but he came to Lahej and surrendered. He also refused to hand over his arms and ammunition to the Sef-el-Islam Ahmed-bin-Kassim, who was deputed by the imam for the purpose. He gave some arms to Syed Ahmed Pasha of Taiz and the sheikhs of Jabel Saber. An Abdali correspondent reports that after the departure of the Turks under Ismail Effendi the Arabs of Saber cut off the water supply from the town of Taiz on account of the misdeeds of Zeidi soldiers there, and that in consequence Syed Ahmed Pasha and Sef-el-Islam were compelled to remove the soldiers to Al Genadia.

Attitude of the Imam.

3. I have received a letter from the imam, dated the 8th Jemad Awal, 1337 (9th February, 1919), a copy of which has been sent to you, in which he deprecated the treatment received by his envoys in Aden, and endeavoured to justify his action in addressing other Powers. He renewed his overtures for an understanding with the British Government.

4. Mahomed-al-Umairi reports that the imam is following a conciliatory policy towards Lower Yemen, and intends to retain the chiefs in their present positions provided the latter pay him tithes. Al Umairi says that having no one on whom to depend for support, the Shafai sheikhs are now showing signs of submission to the imam.

5. Syed Mahomed Taha of Jabel Jihaf reports that with the exception of fifty men all the Zeidis have left Kataba for An-Nadra.

6. Haj Lutf, a merchant from Sana, who has come down with recommendatory letter from the imam, says he left Sana about a month ago. The Turkish troops were then all leaving; there were 200-250 civilians, some of whom meant to leave and others to remain. Mahmud Nedim intended to remain. Mahmud Nedim has much influence over the imam, who believes him to have much knowledge of the state of affairs in all countries. The imam's principal advisers are Abdulla-el-Amri, a Sana Arab, who is the imam's secretary, and was formerly manager of endowed estates; Syed Abdulla-bin-Ibrahim one of the imam's family, who is Wazir; Syed Kassim-el-Azzi, the man who visited Said Pasha at Lahej; and Syed Abbas, one of the Imamic family of the house of El Mehdi. Of these Abdulla-el-Amri is the most influential. The object of Kassim-el-Azzi's visit to Said Pasha was to induce him to go up-country, and to secure the Turkish arms and ammunition. Haj Lutf says the imam is very anxious to get possession of the Tihama and the Lower Yemen, but he thinks he does not want to

encroach on the British protectorate. The imam thinks the British wish to take the Tihama and the Lower Yemen for themselves. Haj Lutf considers that if Mahmud Nedim could be removed from Sana there would be no further difficulty in arriving at a settlement with the imam, whose Arab advisers are not all anti-British. Haj Lutf says the imam issues no proclamations or letters of anti-British nature; on the contrary, he speaks well of the British. Caprotti, who used to live at Sana, has now left. Haj Lutf has heard that he intends to open a business at Hodeida. He says there are no other Europeans at Sana.

7. From the news received by the Political Officer, Hodeida, it appears that the imam has notified to all Arabs that all Turkish Government stores which they may purchase will eventually be confiscated by him.

8. Ghalib Bey is reported to have sold 1,200 spare rifles to Arabs at 25 dollars a rifle, and to have appropriated a quarter of the proceeds for himself as a set-off against arrears of salary due to him.

9. Delegates are reported to have been sent by the imam to visit the syeds and sheikhs in the Tihama with a view to inducing them to accept his domination, but they do not appear to have met with much success. The Zaraniks, Abus and Qubra sheikhs and others have applied to me for assistance against the imam, but I have declined to interfere on their behalf, though I have sanctioned a gift of 10,000 rounds of ammunition for the Zaraniks and Abus for purely defensive purposes. I have told the Officer Commanding, Hodeida, that our policy is to discourage fighting.

10. The imam appears to be endeavouring to extend his rule over the Lower Yemen and the Tihama by pacific means and propaganda. We have had no information as yet of his using force against any of the tribes in these districts. He has occupied Kataba on the border of our protectorate, but, in spite of constant rumours of a Zeidi advance on Dala, he has so far abstained from interfering in any way with places inside our protectorate.

11. Further north he is met by the influence of the Idrisi, who has occupied Zeidiya and the surrounding district. I am sending, under a separate cover, letters which the imam and Mahmud Nedim have addressed to the Syed of Munira in the Zeidiya district. The letters are strongly anti-British and anti-Idrisi, and their tenor is used by the Idrisi to assist him in justifying his own advance southwards.

12. I see no objection to the Idrisi extending his influence as far south as Salif, but I am impressing on his cousin, Syed Mustafa, who is now on a visit to Aden, the undesirability of the Idrisi extending his claims further pending the general settlement of boundaries which we have promised to undertake. The activities of the imam and the Idrisi in the evacuated Turkish districts in the Tihama make it very desirable that this settlement should be made with as little delay as possible.

13. Meanwhile, it is evident that the departure of the Turks has to some extent weakened the position of the imam in the Zeidi districts, where many of the people have been made discontented by his parsimony. A fight is reported between Saleh-bin-Saleh-el-Tairi, Sheikh of Rada and one of the imam's mukadams who was collecting tithes in Juban and Na'wa.

14. A letter has been received from Syed Ahmed Yehia-el-Kibsi, formerly member of the Ottoman Parliament, for the Yemen, advocating the claims of Sef-el-Islam Mohammed Mohsen, which, he says, are supported by the Hashid and Bakil and the sheikhs of Ibb and Udein, and also by the Idrisi. It is evident that this scheme is being promoted by the Idrisi, and I hear that Mohammed Mohsen's son is going to pay the Idrisi a visit. This Sef-el-Islam made overtures to me a few months ago, sending down a letter by Sheikh Musaid Allao, but I gave him no encouragement, nor do I propose to do so on this occasion. One of this Sef-el-Islam's daughters is married to the Imam Yahia, and another the imam's son, while he himself is married to a daughter of the Bakil Sheikh Nasir Mabkhut.

The Idrisi.

15. The Idrisi and Syed Mustafa gave valuable assistance in facilitating the evacuation of the Turks from Asir, and I have thanked them for their help. The Idrisi has been allowed to retain the arms of the Turks who were on his borders, and has furnished me with lists of what he has taken. He appears to have established his influence in the Ebha district and to have obtained the adherence of Hassan-ibn-Ali-ibn-Aidh, while Sherif Hamud has been sent to Ebha in the Idrisi's interest.

16. In the south the Idrisi has occupied Loheiya, Zehra, Mur, Zeidiya and other places. The Idrisi recognises that his stipend of 10,000L. should now cease, but has

asked for a continuance of some assistance to cover the period necessary to re-establish ordinary conditions of trade. I have recommended 7,000L. a month for three months.

17. Captain Clayton returned to Egypt on the 22nd February. Captain Fazluddin, I.M.S., is still medical officer with the Idrisi, and as he has been doing useful work and the Idrisi has asked that he should be allowed to remain, I am recommending a continuation of his appointment for a year.

Abdali Affairs.

18. British troops, with the exception of a post at Hubil, have been withdrawn from Abdali territory. Dar-el-Amir and Halwan have been restored to the Abdali Sultan.

19. With the exception of one or two families, all the Abdali refugees have now returned to Lahej.

20. The proposed settlement of the Subehi question, referred to in paragraph 24 of my letter dated the 5th February, 1919, has been effected. The Abdali Sultan and several of the Subehi sheikhs came in to Aden, and an agreement between the Government and the Abdali, placing the Subehis under the supervision of the latter, was concluded. The treaty has been sent to you for ratification. In accordance with this agreement, the Subehis' stipends will in future be paid through the Abdali. A British cavalry patrol was recently fired at in the Subehi village of Am Rijja. The sheikh of village was brought to Aden, and is being detained here as a political prisoner.

21. The railway from Sheikh Othman has now been completed to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile beyond Lahej, and is being continued to Hubil. The facilities it provides appear to be much appreciated by the inhabitants.

Fadthli Affairs.

22. In my letter of the 3rd January, 1919, I mentioned the visits of Sultan Hussein and Sultan Abdul Kader to Aden. I subsequently wrote a letter to Sultan Hussein, in which I offered to pardon his submission to the Turks in view of the pressure that they put on him and of his age and infirmities, on condition he should recognise his grandson, Sultan Abdul Kader, as his heir, and arrange that his relatives and tribesmen should also recognise him; that he should, during his lifetime, place his full confidence in Abdul Kader; and that he should put a stop to the activities of his son Abdulla. After an attempt to evade these conditions, he has at length complied with them, and Sultan Abdul Kader has now come to Aden with a document by which Sultan Hussein recognises him as his heir and places the administration in his hands, while he himself retains the position of Sultan. I have consequently restored his stipend to him.

23. The chronic dispute between the Fadthlis and the Lower Yafai, over the Nazi's irrigation in Abyan, has recommenced now that the departure of the Turkish post has left the Arabs free to attack each other. Both parties have been invited to come to Aden and submit their quarrel for settlement, and the Fadthli has agreed to do so. But it is doubtful whether it will be possible to find a solution of this very long-standing quarrel.

Upper Yafai.

24. Sultan Saleh Omer has written to say that he and his nephew Sultan Omer Kahtan have arrived at a settlement of their differences, but has not yet sent details of their agreement. Omer Kahtan is recognised by Government as Sultan, but his uncle is the real possessor of power, and this situation has caused trouble for many years.

25. In June 1918, the Naqibs of the Mausatta section of the Upper Yafai, were asked to send down recruits for the Yemen infantry. A desultory correspondence ensued on the subject of conditions of service, but no recruits were forthcoming, until a few weeks ago when the Naqibs unexpectedly came down with 900 men. By this time the Yemen infantry had been fully recruited, and none of the Yafais could be enlisted. They were, therefore, given some money and sent back.

Amiri Affairs.

26. It appears from the latest news that Amir Nasir has come to a settlement with the various Amiri sub-tribes and they have agreed to reinstate him. Syed Mahomed Taba of Jabel Jihaf (Amiri) has written pleading for him and enquiring whether we will take him back into favour. Amir Nasir's brothers, Abdul Hamid and

Saiff, have also written on his behalf, but have been told that Government adheres to the policy of which they had already been informed, of refusing pardon and recognition to Amir Nasr.

Hagariya Politics.

27. Letters have been received from Sheikh Abdul Wahab Noman formerly Turkish kaimakam, of Hagariya, his nephew and also from Mohammed Amin-bin-Kassim Hassan. They represent the rival families of Noman Mukbil and Kassim Hassan. The latter were originally rulers of Hagariya, but were ousted some twenty years ago by the former who were supported by the Turks. Both parties ask for British friendship and support. The Kassim Hassan family are on friendly terms with the Abdali Sultan who has some hopes of extending his influence in Hagariya. Several other Hagariya sheikhs have visited Aden in the hope of receiving presents and support. They include the sheikhs of the Yusufiyin, Abus, Mi'mari, Kabati, Za'za'i, Shawafi, Maktari, and Aghbari. They have all been treated politely, but I have made no commitments with any of these sheikhs, who are outside our protectorate, and our future policy with regard to whom is still undecided.

Sheikh Mahommed Hassan and Sheikh Abdulla Abdul Wahab.

28. These two sheikhs from Lower Yemen who paid prolonged visits to Aden in the hope of gaining our support and material assistance have been told that Government is not prepared to give them munitions. They have been given money presents. Sheikh Mohammed Hassan has left and is now at Jebel Habeshi in the Taiz district. He is a religious leader of some importance, and was very hostile to the Turks, as he now is to the imam. Sheikh Abdulla Abdul Wahab, of Ibb, is still in Aden, but proposes to leave at the end of this month though he has been with difficulty persuaded to depart without arms. He also professes himself to be strongly opposed to the imam.

The Blockade.

29. In view of the Turkish surrender, I have removed various restrictions on exports from Aden which had been imposed locally, and have advocated the resumption of dhow sailings provided the dhows carry proper papers.

Political Officers.

30. Colonel H. F. Jacob, who was attached to the field force as Chief Political Officer, returned to Egypt on the 6th March. Captain Lee-Warner who has written a very interesting report on his recent visit to Mokalla and Shibam, left on the same date.

Yours, &c.
J. M. STEWART.

[55010/ME 44]

No. 14.

Mr. Balfour to Earl Curzon.—(Received April 9.)

(No. 421.)
My Lord,

Paris, April 7, 1919.

WITH regard to your note No. 1861 of the 1st April, forwarding copies of correspondence between His Majesty's High Commissioner at Constantinople and the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs, concerning the Turkish contention that the Capitulations lapsed with the outbreak of war between the two countries, the Turkish contention would appear to be well founded, and the matter will have to be dealt with specifically in the Treaty of Peace. Meanwhile, the application of the Capitulations is no doubt necessary as an interim measure during the period of the armistice.

I am, &c.

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.

[55729/ME 58]

No. 15.

Earl Curzon to Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe (Constantinople).

(No. 611. Urgent and Secret.)
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, April 11, 1919.

CAUCASUS.

Supreme Council of Peace Conference have decided that British troops shall be withdrawn from the Caucasus, and that Italian troops shall take their place. Necessary arrangements are being made by the two War Offices.

[71722/ME 58]

No. 16.

Some Further Considerations against our Evacuation of the Caucasus.

Memorandum by Professor Simpson.

IT is not easy to exaggerate either the strategic importance or the wealth of the natural resources of Transcaucasia, whether regarded from a military point of view or as the future great through-way to the East: the country that commands the Caucasus can dominate Central Asia. In this respect its central position makes it more vitally important than either Mesopotamia or the entry into Asia through South Russia north of the Caspian. Already the Americans see the possibility of developing here a great roadway to the wealth of Turkestan and Western China, by which to circumvent any exclusiveness that the Japanese may endeavour to develop as the result of dominating influence in Eastern China.

2. With the gradual pushing of future storm centres towards the East as a result of the proposed Peace Treaties with Germany and the Allies, the Caucasus is likely to play the part for the next generation that the Balkans played to the past. Great Britain has suffered enormously—indeed, in a sense the recent war has arisen in great part—from the fact that we left the Near East pretty much to look after itself. In the same way in the future we shall suffer again if we leave the Middle East to look after itself.

3. The smaller the world becomes as the result of increased speed in means of communication by land and sea and in the air, and the more the best feeling and culture of the different nations are linked together in a league, the more will the doctrine of non-intervention retreat into the background and the more will the idea of rendering practical assistance and existing moral pressure have to be developed in the interests of the world civilisation as a whole. If it is the case that no region in the world coming under review as the result of peace negotiations has asked for any country other than Great Britain or America to act in the role of mandatory, it seems to the writer no use to either shut our eyes to this fact and its implications, or refrain from letting it be known throughout the world and acting on it, full regard being always given to the reasonable expectations of other Powers. Anything less is really treachery to civilisation.

4. Although we may hope to establish excellent trading relations with countries on the Baltic littoral and to some extent with North Russia, yet, owing to geographical reasons, it is clear that Germany will have a certain advantage in North Russia. So far as Siberia is concerned, that country seems a very natural outlet of enterprise for Japan and the United States in particular. South Russia, on the other hand, is a land of great mineral and agricultural wealth, calling for complete reconstruction of its industrial and commercial life, in which, owing to the alienation of the French, we have the opportunity to play the leading rôle. Transcaucasia, and Georgia in particular, are dependent on the Ukraine and Kuban territories for a large proportion of their food supplies; in fact there is a natural tendency for all the countries bordering on the Black Sea to come into close economical relationship with one another, and that relationship will be very largely determined by the character of the country that is entrusted with the mandate for Transcaucasia.

5. It is understood that Italy may be the mandatory, in support of which proposal it is difficult to find any justification, while many reasons for its inadvisability could be gested: (a) Italy, who up till now has given a large percentage of her surplus

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population to the United States, is anxious to be able to retain them nearer home. Climatically, Georgia resembles Southern Italy, and we can be certain that one result of such a mandatory will be an emigration of Italian population to Georgia, which will only add to the complications of the already too mixed populations in that part of the world. (b) There is no connection, either historical or commercial, between Georgia and Italy, and it is not too much to say that the Georgian representatives consider the suggestion as humiliating to themselves. It is certainly the case that the three Transcaucasian States will require some Great Power upon which to lean for a period of years, but they are not in ignorance of recent Italian history. (c) Already Baron Sonnino has broached the subject of obtaining coal supplies from Poti (anthracite) and from South Russia (as also from the Ukraine) with the Georgian representatives in Paris, the reason given being the excessive price that Italy has to pay to Great Britain for her coal. (d) The Italian colonial record is one of persistent failure and most selfish exploitation. There are great possibilities of her associating herself with discontented Turkish elements and even renewing her relations with Germany over commercial interests that she might be willing and able to share with her in Georgia.

6. Azerbaijan is a hotbed of pan-Turanian propaganda. The relationship of this to future trouble in Persia, Afghanistan and India can be easily realised, and for the sake of the maintenance of law and order in our own possessions in the East, it is of the utmost importance that this point should be under our control so that this movement should at the least not be developed in an anti-British sense—we might be able to meet it and conciliate it—as we have no guarantee that it will not be developed in the hands of any other mandatory.

7. It is understood that the difficulties in connection with the supply of troops have been the main consideration in the proposed evacuation in favour of another Power and that labour at home is also opposed to such British occupation. The writer believes that if this is the case it is simply due to ignorance, owing to the fact that the Government has not taken the people into its confidence. It is not impossible to present a reasoned statement, on the basis of the highest idealism, for the retention of our forces in Transcaucasia, to which the common sense of our people would instinctively respond.

8. The difficulties, moreover, in the way of the expense in the maintenance of forces and general administration there need not be so great as are ordinarily supposed. The writer believes that the money required could be secured from the country itself—one of the richest in the world—in the course of six months, with the restoration of order, for which everybody there would be devoutly thankful. Local policing forces on the Indian army principle could be easily raised, and the need for the two British divisions would vanish.

9. The announcement of our withdrawal will inevitably lead to the renewal of the racial antagonisms, as Italy commands no moral respect whatever. After having stood for the principle of self-determination, we leave ourselves open to the reproach from the peoples of the three Transcaucasian States that we ran away from our words, for it is difficult to suppose that Russia will not be able to overbear the local populations and the Italians alike; in fact we shall have virtually given these people over again to the hands of their oppressors.

10. As public opinion in this country is still in great ignorance of the wealth and trading potentialities of the Caucasus, would it not be advisable to send out a commission to study the whole situation on the spot? The writer is not one of those who believe in a speedy recovery of Russia, but on the other hand, for the reasons given above, believes that the surrender of Transcaucasia at this time will be one of the biggest mistakes in British history, some of whose consequences can already be clearly foreseen.

11. The shaping of the future of Russia is very largely in our hands at the present moment, and it should not be impossible to come to some arrangement with her eventually about this part of the world that would be mutually advantageous and also conserve the rights and aspirations of the local peoples.

Foreign Office, May 9, 1919.

[73146/ME 44]

No. 17.

Rear-Admiral Webb to Earl Curzon.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 1023.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, May 13, 1919.

YOUR telegram No. 86 of 13th January.

French High Commissioner has introduced proposal for an inter-Allied tribunal, composed of one judge of each of the three Allies and one Ottoman, for judging cases, which are becoming increasingly numerous, between foreigners and Ottomans. The local law would be applied. I am sending details by mail, but am telegraphing at his instance, as he attaches great importance to it. I do not attach such importance, and I fear lest its adoption should give rise to very great practical differences in application and large risk of friction. He points out, even if conclusion of peace is near, this new institution would form a valuable nucleus for system eventually to be adopted. This appears to me entirely doubtful, especially in view of terms of your telegram quoted above.

I promised, however, to telegraph to you to request your instructions.

[80096/ME 44]

No. 18.

Rear-Admiral Webb to Earl Curzon.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 744.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, May 12, 1919.

IN reference to my telegram No. 1023 of to-day's date, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith two memoranda, drawn up in the French High Commission, on the subject of the establishment of an inter-Allied tribunal for the purpose of trying cases between subjects of the Allied Powers and Ottoman subjects.

2. I am personally quite unable to agree either to the necessity or to the advisability of such a tribunal. It is true that considerable inconvenience is caused to individuals by the protracted period inevitably necessary for the conclusion of peace, but it cannot be doubted but that this period is now near its end. On the other hand, Allied subjects who have come here have done so with the full knowledge that peace conditions had not yet been established, and that they must be prepared to make the best of things as they find them. No complaints from British subjects on this head have been brought to my notice.

3. I do not understand exactly what is meant by the adoption of "local law," and I foresee immense difficulties and possibilities of friction in the application of any such scheme.

4. M. DeFrance's juridical adviser betrays the utmost eagerness, however, to get it adopted without delay, and points out that whatever may be the decision of the Peace Conference as to the future of Turkey, such an institution as that proposed cannot fail to be a valuable nucleus, round which the judicial system eventually to be established may centre.

5. The Turkish Government feel the same inconvenience as the French High Commission in this matter, and I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a note from the Sublime Porte dealing with it.

I have, &c.
(For High Commissioner),
RICHARD WEBB.

Enclosure 1 in No. 18.

Memorandum by French High Commissioner respecting the Establishment of an Inter-Allied Tribunal.

(No. 1.)

DANS leur réunion du 6 mai 1919, MM. Cillière, Galli et Waugh ont examiné la question de savoir dans quelles conditions l'administration de la justice entre étrangers, d'une part, et entre étrangers et Ottomans, d'autre part, pourrait être reprise jusqu'à la conclusion de la paix.

[4358]

E 2

Ils ont été d'accord pour constater qu'entre étrangers de même nationalité ou de nationalités différentes, les tribunaux consulaires demeurent compétents dans les mêmes conditions qu'avant la guerre, les Puissances alliées n'ayant jamais admis la prétention du Gouvernement ottoman de supprimer les Capitulations.

Quant aux différends entre étrangers et Ottomans, considérant qu'il n'est pas possible en l'état actuel de revenir à la juridiction antérieure à la guerre, et que, d'autre part, une juridiction nouvelle, nécessairement exceptionnelle et temporaire, ne serait susceptible d'être instituée que dans le but de régler des litiges présentant un réel caractère d'urgence, ils ont été d'avis de soumettre aux Hauts-Commissaires alliés la suggestion de créer, en matière judiciaire, un organisme analogue à la Commission d'Armistice en ce qu'il serait constitué par des délégués de chaque Puissance alliée et un délégué du Gouvernement ottoman. Ce serait une sorte de Commission judiciaire interalliée appelée à statuer sur toutes affaires civiles et commerciales quelconques présentant un caractère d'extrême urgence. Ce tribunal, qui remplacerait la juridiction purement ottomane inaugurée en 1914, serait institué par délégation des Hauts-Commissaires alliés, et serait composé de quatre juges, dont un de la nationalité de chacune des trois Puissances alliées et le quatrième de nationalité ottomane. Les trois premiers seraient désignés par les Hauts-Commissariats respectifs et le quatrième par le Gouvernement ottoman. En cas de partage, le président aurait voix prépondérante. La présidence serait dévolue à chacun des trois juges alliés, à tour de rôle, par exemple mensuellement. Les fonctions de greffier et d'huissier seraient remplies, à tour de rôle, par deux personnes choisies par le président dans le personnel de son Haut-Commissariat. Les jugements seraient rendus en dernier ressort et leur exécution serait assurée par la force publique interalliée.

La loi applicable serait la loi locale.

L'exécution des décisions rendues contre des Alliés par les tribunaux locaux continuerait à être rigoureusement refusée.

Telles sont, dans les grandes lignes, les conditions dans lesquelles ce tribunal serait institué. Au cas où les trois Gouvernements intéressés donneraient leur adhésion de principe à la création de ce tribunal, un règlement détaillé serait élaboré ultérieurement par les trois Hauts-Commissaires. Quant à présent, il s'agit de proposer cette suggestion à la séance du Conseil des Hauts-Commissaires alliés qui doit avoir lieu le 8 de ce mois, afin que les Hauts-Commissaires, s'ils l'approuvent, la soumettent sans délai à leurs Gouvernements en leur en signalant l'urgence.

Si les trois Gouvernements intéressés approuvent ce projet, les Hauts-Commissaires alliés inviteront le Gouvernement ottoman à désigner un juge pour faire partie du tribunal. Si le Gouvernement ottoman refusait de le désigner, il serait passé outre et le tribunal fonctionnerait composé des trois juges alliés.

La question des frais judiciaires sera examinée et réglée en détail lors de l'élaboration du règlement relatif au fonctionnement du tribunal. Les frais judiciaires devront être acquittés, sauf admission au bénéfice de l'assistance judiciaire. L'excédent éventuel des droits ainsi perçus pourrait être réparti entre les œuvres de bienfaisance relevant des trois services consulaires alliés.

En cas de crime ou de délit commis par un sujet ottoman contre un ressortissant des Puissances alliées, ou inversement, l'affaire serait instruite par le service consulaire dont relèverait le sujet étranger intéressé.

(No. 2.)

Dans leur réunion du 29 avril 1919, MM. Cillière et Galli ont examiné la question de savoir dans quelles conditions l'administration de la justice entre étrangers, d'une part, et entre étrangers et Ottomans, d'autre part, pourrait être reprise jusqu'à la conclusion de la paix.

1. Ils ont été d'accord pour constater qu'entre étrangers de même nationalité ou de nationalités différentes, les tribunaux consulaires demeurent compétents dans les mêmes conditions qu'avant la guerre, les Puissances alliées n'ayant jamais admis la prétention du Gouvernement ottoman de supprimer les Capitulations.

2. Quant aux différends entre étrangers et Ottomans, considérant qu'il n'est pas possible en l'état actuel de revenir à la juridiction antérieure à la guerre, et que, d'autre part, une juridiction nouvelle, nécessairement exceptionnelle et temporaire, ne serait susceptible d'être instituée que dans le but de régler des litiges présentant un réel caractère d'urgence, ils ont été d'avis de suggérer le recours à l'un des deux moyens suivants :

Le premier s'appliquerait exclusivement au règlement des questions d'expulsion de locataires. Ces questions constituent la grande majorité des différends actuels entre étrangers et Ottomans, et il serait fâcheux sous tous rapports de les laisser plus longtemps en suspens, le bon droit des étrangers étant manifeste dans la plupart des affaires de cette nature. Dans ces affaires, l'agent remplissant les fonctions de consul statuerait seul par délégation spéciale du Haut-Commissaire. La procédure consisterait en une tentative de conciliation, suivie soit d'un procès-verbal établissant l'accord des parties et ayant force exécutoire, soit d'une ordonnance constatant la non-conciliation ou le défaut et décidant, s'il y a lieu, l'expulsion. Celle-ci serait effectuée par la force publique de la nationalité de l'étranger en cause, après avis donné au sujet ottoman d'avoir à évacuer les lieux.

3. Toutefois, en dehors des affaires de location et sous-location, d'autres litiges d'un caractère urgent existent également et sont susceptibles de se produire encore entre étrangers et Ottomans. MM. Cillière et Galli ont en conséquence envisagé un second moyen, qui consisterait à créer, en matière judiciaire, un organe analogue à la Commission d'Armistice en ce qu'il serait constitué par des délégués de chaque Puissance alliée et un délégué du Gouvernement ottoman. Ce serait une sorte de commission judiciaire interalliée appelée à statuer sur toutes affaires civiles et commerciales quelconques, de location ou autres, présentant un caractère d'extrême urgence. Ce tribunal, qui remplacerait la juridiction purement ottomane inaugurée en 1914, serait institué par délégation des Hauts-Commissaires alliés, et serait composé de quatre juges, dont un de chacune des trois Puissances alliées et le quatrième de nationalité ottomane. Les trois premiers seraient désignés par les Hauts-Commissariats respectifs et le quatrième par le Gouvernement ottoman. En cas de partage, le président aurait voix prépondérante. La présidence serait dévolue à chacun des trois juges alliés, à tour de rôle, par exemple mensuellement. Les fonctions de greffier et d'huissier seraient remplies, à tour de rôle, par deux personnes choisies par le président dans le personnel de son Haut-Commissariat. Les jugements seraient rendus en dernier ressort et leur exécution serait assurée par la force publique interalliée.

La loi applicable serait la loi locale.

L'exécution des décisions rendues contre des Alliés par les tribunaux locaux continuerait à être rigoureusement refusée.

MM. Cillière et Galli ont décidé de communiquer les suggestions qui précèdent à M. Waugh, qui a été empêché de prendre part à cette réunion, en vue de les soumettre éventuellement à l'examen du Conseil des Hauts-Commissaires alliés.

Enclosure 2 in No. 18.

Turkish Note verbale communicated to British High Commissioner.

Il résulte des informations transmises au Ministère des Affaires étrangères par les autorités impériales compétentes que l'action de la justice subit de graves difficultés pour suivre son cours, et même est arrêtée souvent par des mesures de coercition parfois extrêmes.

Le résultat en est que les procès contre les sujets britanniques restent en suspens et leurs engagements en souffrance.

Cet état de choses ne tient pas compte de la nécessité qu'il y a de ce que chacun puisse entrer dans les créances ou faire triompher les droits qu'il peut avoir, ceci en vue de sauvegarder les transactions du public et, par conséquent, l'intérêt général.

D'autre part, il va sans dire que, dans cette situation, les sujets anglais n'étant pas mis dans l'obligation d'exécuter leurs engagements, les Ottomans ne seront forcément pas en mesure de remplir les leurs, ce qui ne manquera pas de causer de sérieux troubles dans les relations économiques quotidiennes entre particuliers.

Ceci contribue à créer une situation judiciaire anormale, qu'il n'est pas sans intérêt de faire cesser.

D'ailleurs, les mesures prises en cette matière sont généralement basées sur le témoignage de plaignants intéressés dans la cause, ce qui n'est pas de nature à contribuer à garantir la distribution équitable de la justice.

Au fond, il y a lieu d'observer que, si même l'abrogation en temps de paix des anciens traités était contestable—malgré que des cas analogues se fussent produits à d'autres occasions et que les principes en vigueur l'admissent—néanmoins, il y a accord au sujet de l'effet que la guerre produit, par les traités, sur les conventions et sur tous les autres accords internationaux, effet qui consiste à les supprimer.

Étant donné que l'état de paix n'est pas encore rétabli et que les principes admis pour le reconstituer consacrent la pleine souveraineté du Gouvernement territorial, il semble que, dans la période intermédiaire actuelle qui constitue la veille de l'application de cette règle, il n'est pas opportun de suspendre le fonctionnement des rouages judiciaires du pays; qu'il serait plus avantageux de ne pas soulever la question dans les présentes conjonctures, et qu'il conviendrait d'en remettre le règlement définitif à la conclusion du Traité de Paix.

Les considérations qui précèdent induisent le Ministère Impérial à prier le Haut-Commissariat de vouloir bien les examiner avec tout l'esprit de bienveillance et de justice qu'elles méritent et de donner aux difficultés qui font l'objet de la présente note verbale une solution équitable pour les intérêts ottomans—solution dont la conséquence sera de favoriser également ceux des sujets britanniques.

[83024/ME 58]

No. 19.

Consul Stevens to Earl Curzon.—(Received June 2.)

(No. 15. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Batoum, May 14, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to report that the news which reached here towards the end of last week in respect to the imminent substitution of the British forces in the Transcaucasus by Italian troops has been received with bitter disappointment by all classes of the population of this country, and, generally speaking, has created a situation verging on panic.

The contingencies which the contemplated change is likely to involve are being hotly discussed by all nationalities, and it is universally admitted that the arrangement, if brought into being, can only have a paralysing effect on the efforts made by us during the past six months to establish peace and order in the Caucasus.

The policy of substituting British troops by military forces from Italy is moreover strongly condemned on the ground that up to present the attitude of the Allies towards the Caucasus has been to lend their support to those nationalities, parties and factions that are prepared to resist any attempt made by the turbulent portions of the population in the direction of the development of communistical and anarchical theories.

Furthermore, since our occupation of the Caucasus this end was being pursued with considerable success, and although probably the desired standard of order and tranquillity has not yet been attained, the progress made in the desired direction has been great, and the population, under the just and equitable guidance of our military authorities, was gradually settling down to peaceful conditions.

On the other hand, men of long personal experience and knowledge of the country, regardless of nationality, express the view that the progress made by us in so short a time towards the establishment of more or less normal conditions has indeed been surprising; they regard the change which is about to take place with the utmost anxiety, and sincerely trust that, for the good of Europe, this country, its populations and the public at large, there is still time for the question to receive serious reconsideration. The Russian element is exceedingly disconcerted at the contemplated change.

At this critical point of time for the Caucasus the Allies are allowing the Italians, with their universally acknowledged extreme socialistic views, to enter a country which has not yet completely recovered from the effects of the terrible upheaval which has recently so thoroughly ravaged it, and their advent is therefore justly looked upon with much alarm and consternation, as it bodes no good. In point of fact, the likelihood of another prolonged period of strife, disorder and anarchy is foreshadowed, during which the possibility of much additional bloodshed is not excluded. Europeans foresee the necessity, soon after the arrival of the Italians here, of a general exodus from the Caucasus.

The few men that have been allowed to land from the Italian ship in the roads in order to march through the streets of Batoum have created anything but a favourable impression on the inhabitants of the town. Their slouchy gait is in striking contrast to the portly demeanour of our troops, both British and Indian; dirty brass musical instruments and other indications of the lack of all those qualities which play such an important part in inspiring Eastern peoples with the required sense of authority is being greatly criticised, and it is generally admitted that the effect of the wholesome

influence of our men on the local population, in the course of a short time, will be completely effaced.

Bolshevik propaganda is exceedingly active throughout the Caucasus. The situation at Baku during the past few days is not reassuring. Events there point to the fact that the strike, in itself unimportant, failed in its objective. It was nevertheless of a purely political character, since it originated in consequence of our refusal to allow petroleum products from Baku to reach the Bolsheviks at Astrakhan. This propaganda, in a great measure, likewise penetrates to our troops. To their great credit they have resisted and resented all advances made to them. There is, however, no assurance that, under their less disciplined régime, Italian troops, in face of the temptation to which they will be all along exposed, with equanimity similar to that of our men, will be staunch enough to withstand the evil effects of the extremist campaign the turbulent elements of the Caucasus are now so busily engaged in.

I do not know how long it will take the Allies to stamp out Bolshevism, but I do know that we are making strenuous combined efforts to defeat their plans and outrageous methods in all countries and places where they have taken root, and yet in dealing with matters concerning the Caucasus, by introducing the Italian element, we foster conditions which can only lead to results quite opposed to those which we are struggling against in other parts of the world, and we will thereby allow a perfect hotbed of Bolshevism to be established in the rear of Denikin's army.

Apart from the blow that will be dealt at our prestige in the eyes of the peoples of this portion of the East and the damaging effects which our evacuation of the Caucasus will have on British trade and enterprise, the financial aspect of the question completely disqualifies the Italians from taking any active part in the future of this country. Nor has Italy any economic ties with the Caucasus. With the exception of about 100,000 oranges and from 1,200 to 1,500 tons of sulphur that are annually imported into Batoum from Italy no import or export trade between the two countries exists.

A further feature of the situation consequent on the coming of the Italians to the Caucasus is the question of supplies. All stores needed for the maintenance of our troops are brought to Batoum by us. On the other hand, the Italians, even in their own country, are dependent on America for their foodstuffs. They will be unable to import a single pound of anything into the Caucasus. They will therefore be compelled to fall back on local resources for their stores and supplies. Locally no foodstuffs are forthcoming. No supplies are reaching us from the northern districts of the Caucasus, the country is experiencing a food crisis bordering on famine and hungry men are a dangerous element to deal with.

In view of the foregoing, the Italians, do what they will, cannot police the Caucasus with less than 100,000 men, which means so many more mouths craving for food than at present, and therefore discontented persons being dumped down in this country. Without going further into this question, I leave it to competent persons to pass judgment on the issues to which the evacuation of the British troops from the Caucasus is likely to lead.

I have, &c.

P. STEVENS.

[73147/ME 44]

No. 20.

Earl Curzon to Rear-Admiral Webb (Constantinople).

(No. 858.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, May 19, 1919.

YOUR telegram No. 1023 of 13th May: Inter-Allied Tribunal.

I am consulting Peace Delegation, but do not at present feel able to modify opinion expressed in my telegram No. 86.

[85217/ME 44]

No. 21.

Acting Political Resident, Aden, to Earl Curzon.—(Received June 6.)

(No. C. 4. Secret.)

My Lord,

Aden, May 21, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, three copies of the fourth Aden news letter, dated the 21st May, 1919, to his Excellency the High Commissioner, Cairo.

I have, &c.

L. N. BEATTY,

Brigadier-General.

Enclosure in No. 21.

Fourth Aden News Letter.

Political Agent, Aden, to High Commissioner, Cairo.

(Secret.)

Your Excellency,

Aden Residency, May 21, 1919.

I CONTINUE a record of events of political interest in connection with the imam, the Idrisi, and the tribes of the Aden Protectorate, from the date of General Stewart's letter of the 31st March, 1919.

I.—THE IMAM.

(a.) *The Tehama.*

1. With reference to paragraph 9 of General Stewart's last letter on the subject of the imam's activities in the Tehama, the Political Officer, Hodeida, now reports that the Sheikhs of Jebel Bura'a have been pressing Suleiman Bukeit of the Aboos tribe to make submission to the imam. The Aboos tribe asked for help in arms and ammunition to defend themselves against possible aggression, and are reported to have been given 6,000 rounds of Turkish ammunition by the officer commanding, Hodeida. The tribe is said to be in possession of 206 Mauser and 2,610 Italian and French rifles. Sayyed Abdul Qadir, of Marawa, also received telegraphic instructions from the imam and Mahmud Nedim to induce Suleiman Bukeit and akils of the Aboos tribe to cut off their relations with the British Government, and also to contrive to take away from them the ammunition obtained by the Aboos from the British. The ex-Vali was informed, in reply, that according to Suleiman Bukeit the object of his relations with the British was to get all he could out of them and nothing further. Suleiman also denied having visited Hodeida. The Quhra sheikhs refused to remonstrate with Suleiman for fear of causing trouble between the two tribes, and suggested his being treated direct.

2. The general attitude of the Quhra tribe, as reported to the Political Officer, Hodeida, is that they will not fight either the imam or the Idrissi or the British Government, but would accept the domination of whichever of them turned out to be the strongest. Negotiations were opened by the imam with this tribe, who submitted the following conditions under which they would be prepared to accept his suzerainty, and at the same time nominated one Sheikh Yahya Ali Humeida (also known as Abu Hadi) as the administrator of their territory and their spokesman. The conditions are:—

1. The Quhra tribe to pay tithes on lands and cattle, as in the time of the Turks. No other taxes are to be demanded by the imam.
2. The appointment or dismissal of mansabs, sheikhs and akils in the district to be in accordance with old Turkish regulations, viz., by selection by the people.
3. Transit dues to be levied by the sheikhs and akils in their respective territories, as has been customary from time immemorial. Each sheikh or akil to be responsible for the safety of the routes in his own limits.
4. Qazis, officials, clerks, and gendarmes are to be nominated by the inhabitants of the districts concerned, subject to confirmation by the Council of Elders

5. Imamic forces are not to be sent to the Quhra country unless applied for by the sheikhs.
6. Criminals to be dealt with locally, and are not to be sent to the hills for trial or imprisonment.
7. Quhra sheikhs are not to be summoned to the hills, but they may proceed there of their own will.
8. Municipal taxes are to be levied at Bajil, and to be expended under the authority of the local ulemas and sheikhs.
9. Local customs and usages are not to be changed.
10. Judgments passed by the local qazis are to be submitted for confirmation or revision to the inspector at Sanaa appointed under the Sharia laws.
11. If Zeidi troops are sent to the Tehama on the demand of the sheikhs the cost of their maintenance ought to be met by the imam.
12. The salaries of the local officials to be fixed by the imam, based on the amount of the revenues of the particular district.
13. Certain sub-tribes of the Quhra who have long been settled in Hujjaila, Dhimna, Majoura, Samhar, parts of the Aboos country and other places, should be included in the Quhra confederacy for purposes of administration.
14. The above conditions are offered to the imam by the sheikhs, akils, and notables of the Bajil Qaza who, in the event of their non-acceptance, or in case of breach of such conditions at any time, reserve to themselves the freedom to act as they desire.

Reports differ as to the result, but the predominating opinion is that in returning the conditions through Sheikh Mohammad Ahmad Mashoor of Hujjaila, the imam insisted on the Quhra paying all tithes to his representative at Bajil, facilitating the passage of Zeidi troops through their country to the coast to establish order in that region, and accepting Sayyed Muhammad Hashim (son-in-law of the imam) as 'Amil at Bajil. As an inducement the imam promised to liberate Sheikh Mujaikar from prison when his demands had all been agreed to. It also appears that the Imam asked the Quhra to contribute towards the maintenance of the force he intended sending to the Tehama. The Quhra, through their sheikh, Abu Hadi, have informed the imam that his terms are not acceptable, mainly because they would not tolerate the presence of Zeidi troops amongst them, and, secondly, because their presence would only aggravate the situation, owing to the great scarcity prevailing in the country. They urged also that the country was quite quiet, and there was no fear of aggression from either the Idrisi or elsewhere. They further told the imam that they were not prepared to listen to any proposals unless Sheikh Mujaikar was liberated from the prison at Menakha. The imam has summoned his envoy, Muhammad Ahmad of Hujjaila, to Sana to discuss further the Quhra terms.

3. The imamic soldiers in Jebel Bura quarrelled with the inhabitants there and were driven out in consequence. Sayyed Abdul Qadir, who was appealed to to make peace between them, has succeeded in doing so.

4. Sheikh Munassar, chief of the Zaraniqs, was also approached with a view to bringing his tribe under the domination of the imam. He pointed out in reply, that as the Zaraniq confederation comprised of a considerable number of clans, chronic strife was inevitable in their country, and that only a well-equipped military force could cope with the situation. He suggested the appointment of a kaïmakam in his district and the raising of 200 militia, to be equipped and maintained by the imam. He also expressed his willingness to organise the force and asked for the necessary number of rifles, ammunition for 200 men, two guns with gunners, and a certain number of Turkish officers to command the militia, and guaranteed peace and order in the country if his proposals were agreed to. In a subsequent communication to Mahmud Nedim, Sheikh Munassar informed him that all sections of the Zaraniq, assembled at the tomb of a saint (Ahmad Moosa Ujjail of Bet-el-Fakih), had sworn to co-operate with one another and to support the Ottoman Government, and had selected him (Munassar) kaïmakam of Bet-el-Fakih with a view to protecting their district from foreign aggression and ensuring the routes therein. He enquired from the ex-Vali the result of his reference to the imam about 200 rifles, and also for orders about the appointment of a sheikh for Bet-el-Fakih and president of its municipality owing to his responsibility in the matter of the murder of certain Arabs. The imam is reported to have telegraphed to Sheikh Munassar Sagheer appointing him his 'Amil at Bet-el-Fakih and exhorting him to treat the inhabitants with consideration and fairness, and not give cause for discontent in

the district. He further enjoined him to preserve peace and order, and to apply to Sayyed Ali-bin-Ibrahim, the 'Amil of Reima and Buraa, if he were in need of troops for the purpose of maintaining order. The imam also reminded the sheikh that all tithes on crops and cattle should be collected in his name and remitted to Sanaa. Sheikh Munassar has telegraphed to Mahmud Nedim asking for 200 men, with ammunition and guns, to subdue the Zaraniq clans. This sheikh is also intriguing with the Idrisi and has asked him to send his representative to the Zaraniq country. At the same time he has forwarded to our Political Officer at Hodeida a letter referring to his correspondence with Mahmud Nedim and enclosing Abu Hadi's letter to him containing the purport of the pact between the imam and the Quhra. It is evident that Sheikh Munassar's principal object is to obtain rifles and ammunition from the imam.

5. Sayyed Abdul Qadir received a telegram from the imam advising him of the despatch of a Zeidi force under Sheikh Ali Salami, from Menakha to the Tehama, to attack Hodeida in conjunction with the Quhra. This report was evidently false, as the reported commander was seen ill in bed by one of our agents at Menakha, who found no signs of any military activity. The only garrison at Menakha was posted at Jebel Shibam and consisted of twenty-five men, and there were also twenty gendarmes attached to the imam's agent in town.

6. The imam is reported to have sent two mares to Bajil, one as a present to Abu Hadi and the other to Ismail Baqwi.

(b.) *Lower Yemen.*

7. The kaïmakam of Hujjaria, Abdul Wahab Noman, sent Sheikh Abdul Haq-el-Aghbari to ascertain the attitude of the British Government towards the Yemen. He declared that it was well known that the country is to become a British protectorate. He was informed that the British Government had no intention of extending its limits, but it was impossible to say as yet what the future policy would be. Sheikh Abdul Haq said that Abdul Wahab would throw in his lot with the imam, Muhammad Nasir Muqbil or even the Sultan of Lahej, whichever of the three was recognised as the chief in the Lower Yemen. Submission to the imam, however, he stated, would be made with reluctance, as the Shafais of Lower Yemen would prefer to manage their own affairs, with the help and advice of the British Government.

8. The Assistant Resident, Perim, reports that Ali Othman, kaïmakam of Moza, was prepared to surrender the Turkish arms and ammunition with him to us. At present, Sheikh Muhammad Hassan was trying to take possession of the guns and arms at Moza, and had attacked Ali Othman with this intention.

9. The Assistant Resident, Perim, further reports that the sheikhs of Khokha and surrounding villages have requested to be placed under British protection. The usual reply has been returned to them.

10. The Assistant Resident, Perim, was informed by the messenger of the above sheikhs that they exported seventy dhow loads of coffee, skins, sweet oil, ghee, jowari, dates, &c., monthly to Jibuti. This is no doubt an exaggeration, but it confirms information from other sources that dhow traffic is carried on between this coast and Jibuti.

11. A conflict between the Zeidi troops under the Saif-el-Islam and the Ahl Hubaish has occurred owing to the former demanding taxes from the latter. The Ahl Hubaish assisted apparently by people from Ibb, Udain, &c., are reported to have killed over sixty Zeidi soldiers and to have taken seventy prisoners including one officer, and also one gun and two machine guns. The sheikh of Sabir and Ibn Abdul Wahid mediated between the parties and got the Zeidis liberated on the condition that the imamic troops would withdraw from the Hubaish territory and would take no further action in the matter. The Zeidis appeared to have ignored this condition and came down again in force, but were defeated a second time, and subsequently retreated to Ibb where, according to one report, Saif-el-Islam Ahmed-bin-Kassim is besieged. The news of this fighting in the Hubaish country has been confirmed from several sources. It must be remembered that all these reports come from anti-Zeidi partisans.

12. Four hundred Zeidi troops are reported to have entered Kataba with a kaïmakam and invited people to submit to the imam. Owing to the reluctance of the people to obey this order, the troops fired on the people who returned the fire. Twenty casualties are reported on both sides.

(c.) *Upper Yemen.*

13. Another rival claimant to the imamate of Yemen has sprung up in Muhammad Mohsin-bin-el-Mutawakkil whose claim has been submitted here by the Kibsi, *vide*

paragraph 14 of the last news report. The Ahl Hubaish and most of the Lower Yemenites support his claim, and it is stated that he is being supported by the Idrisi, who has written letters to him, and by the Hashid and Bekil. Ibn-el-Mutawakkil is reported to have occupied Hajja and Sada while Rubeiten was entered by a force under Sayyed-el-Muta and Saleh-bin-Saleh Ali Tairi. The Arhab clan have taken sides with the imam. This news requires confirmation, however. With regard to the claims of Bin-el-Mutawakkil the Kibsi Sayyed brought a number of recommendatory letters from both Zeidi and Shafai chiefs. In his verbal explanation, however, the Sayyed stated that it was not intended that Bin-el-Mutawakkil should actually become imam, but merely that he should be placed in authority pending the election of a new imam. Bin-el-Mutawakkil does not fulfil all the conditions essential in an imam as he is not sufficiently learned, though he is sufficiently suited in all other respects. The two best people for the actual imamate according to El-Kibsi are Sharif Muhammad-bin-Abdullah-el-Dhayyani and Sayyed Muhammad-bin-el-Hadi Sharafuddin alias Abu Neb. El-Kibsi denied that the movement was initiated by the Idrisi. The scheme, he said, originated amongst the Zeidis, who were discontented with Imam Yahya, and the Idrisi was subsequently approached on account of his friendship and influence with the British Government which it was hoped would assist in promoting the scheme. Under an arrangement with the Ibn-el-Mutawakkil the Idrisi is to extend his control over Lower Yemen. El-Kibsi said he recognised the disadvantage which such a position would entail to the Zeidis. El-Kibsi was told that it was the desire of the British Government to be on friendly terms with the Zeidi ruler, but that it did not wish to interfere amongst rival claimants of the imamate. A messenger of Sheikh Jabran-el-Gashm, one of the Hashid chiefs, brought from him a letter in support of El Kibsi's mission, but the messenger, in an interview, stated that the Hashid and Bakil could advance against the imam only if supported, otherwise they would settle with him. On enquiry as to the method of settlement, the messenger stated that the imam had already offered to sacrifice twenty-five bullocks and to depute Hashid and Bakil soldiers to collect revenue on his behalf, the soldiers getting 5 dollars per month and the sheikhs larger sums. All the Hashid and Bakil would come into this arrangement. According to the messenger those with the Idrisi say that they can get no more out of him and so will return to the imam. A definite reply has now been made to Muhammad-bin-el-Mutawakkil, as well as to this messenger, that the British Government is not prepared to interfere in the internal Zeidi affairs, and therefore can give him and the Hashid and Bakil no assistance against Imam Yahya. With reference to the Hashid and Bakil, our Political Officer at Hodeida reports that his agent, who was in Sanaa on the 8th April, saw 100 to 150 Hashid tribesmen arriving in Sanaa daily for enlistment in the imam's army. Over 11,000 men had collected by the middle of April, and it was proposed to send 3,000 men towards Taiz under Muhammad-bin-el-Mutawakkil.

14. The Hamadan tribesmen collected round Sanaa to demonstrate against the imprisonment of their sheikh, Ali Mutlaq, but they were pacified by Sharif Ali Eshshawi and Sharif Abdulla-ed-Dumain. Sheikh Ali Mutlaq has been liberated, but is not permitted to leave Sanaa.

14A. Mahmud Nedim, ex-Vali of the Yemen, continues to advise the imam and to issue false communiqués of war news. Very recently he announced the Turkish reoccupation of Bagdad and Palestine. The latest reports say that there are about 39 Turkish military and medical officers and 25 civilians, and also 250 regular soldiers still in Sanaa and in the employ of the imam.

II.—THE IDRISI.

15. The Idrisi is very anxious to extend his influence all over the Tehama, and reports of deputations and letters being despatched to him by the tribes south of Hodeida have been received from different sources. He was addressed on the subject and warned not to extend his activities south of Zeidiyeh. His reply is, on the whole, satisfactory, although he argues that it is the people of the country who desire to come under his rule. He as usual displays great jealousy of the Imamic propaganda.

The Idrisi also received a deputation from the north which brought him letters to show that the people were anxious to have Sharia law. It was considered advisable not to give the Idrisi any encouragement in the matter of meddling with the affairs of territory lying at such a long distance from his own as Shahrar and Basha, and discussion on the subject was therefore refused. Captain Fazl-ud-Din reports the arrival in Jizan of another deputation of B. Shahrar, who stated that Ibn Saood had

sent a force of 2,500 men to attack Baish, in King Hussein's territory. The Idrisi appeared very suspicious of the movements of King Hussein towards Kunfida and Asir. The submission of Hassan Ali-bin-Aiz, of Ebha, appears to be altogether sincere, and he has again renewed his oath of fealty to the Idrisi with all the show of respectful submission. Sharif Hamood, the Idrisian representative at Ebha, is still there.

16. Sayed Mustapha-el-Idrisi and Captain Mahomed Fazl-ud-Din, I.M.S., returned to Jizan on the 27th April, 1919. The Idrisi, according to Captain Fazl-ud-Din, was very grateful to the British Government for their having sent him back.

17. Captain Mahomed Fazl-ud-Din reports that the Idrisi and Sayed Mustapha both seem to think that in the matter of trade the Government at Aden are treating them unduly harshly. He was shown manifests to show that three dhows had arrived in Jizan from Djibouti and Massowa respectively in three days and brought 1,000 cases kerosine oil, 200 bundles of dates, 100 bales piece-goods and 170 bales of condiments, &c. The Idrisi stated that Massowa and Djibouti had both been allowed fifteen dhows each per month for trade with Jizan but that his own dhows were refused this concession. The allowance for Jibuti is actually five dhows.

18. The Idrisi representative at Zeidiyah sent a party of men to occupy Salif but on a representation being addressed to the Idrisi, he agreed to withdraw from the place which has now been occupied by a party of our own troops from Kamaran. Fifty-two of the Idrisi's men are, however, reported to be encamped at Salif still, and I am writing to him again on the subject.

19. The Idrisi has been informed that Government have sanctioned the payment of 7,000l per mensem to him for the months of April, May and June 1919.

III.—SHEIKH MOHAMMED HASSAN.

20. This sheikh is reported to have occupied Mokha and he is trying hard to get possession of the Turkish guns, arms, and ammunition, now in the possession of Ali Othman, kaimakam of Mokha. The latter has established himself in a house on a hill near Moza village and has up to now defied the sheikh's attempts. The sheikh is said to have attacked Moza with about 3,000 men, of whom 600 were armed with rifles and the rest with clubs and sticks only. He has made repeated requests to this residency for assistance, which have been refused.

IV.—MOHAMMED NASIR MUKBIL.

21. Mohammad Nasir Mukbil is reported to have occupied Taiz at the invitation of the inhabitants. The imam again invited him to Sanaa but he excused himself on the score of infirmity, old age and ill health. The tribes round about Taiz have been plundering caravans and otherwise harassing the travellers. One agent goes so far as to report that all the gardens round the town have been laid waste by these robbers and the summer houses in them demolished. Sayyed Yehya-el-Filali-al-Mahi, who has recently returned to Aden from a visit to Mares and other districts, says that an alliance has been made between Mohammed Nasir Mukbil, Ahmed Pasha of Taiz, the sons of Ali Abdulla of Udein, the family of Abu Ras of Di Sifal, and Abdul Wahab Noman of Hujariya by which they have all placed themselves under the leadership of Mohamed Nasir Mukbil with the object of resisting the Zeidis.

22. Reports from Jebel Jihaf state that Mohammad Nasir and his nephew have sent threatening letters to the Sayyed of Jebel Jihaf and others urging them to submit to his authority but that the Amir of Dala and others have decided to fight him in case Mohammad Nasir actually launches an attack on that territory. Sayed Mohammed Taha of Jebel Jihaf has been to Aden and produced one of these letters. He has been told that Government would not countenance any invasion of protected districts by Mohammad Nasir Mukbil. The reports of Mohammad Nasir's attempts to establish himself on our side of the border are probably largely false. I am taking steps to get further and more authentic information about this.

V.—ADEN PROTECTORATE.

(a.) Amiri Affairs.

23. The qazi of Dala has written and requested a reconsideration of the Government decision about Amir Nasr. Sayyed Yehia-el-Filali says that the Amir's want no one but Amir Nasr, but that if Government absolutely insists on his deposition,

they will put up one of his brothers. But he says the tribesmen are afraid that if Amir Nasr is deposed by his tribesmen, it will be a precedent for the deposition of other minor sheikhs such as themselves.

Amir Nasr has himself written to me asking for pardon and others have written interceding for him.

(b.) Fadhli and Lower Yafai.

24. The son of the Lower Yafai Sultan arrived in Aden in connection with the settlement of the dispute over the Nazia's irrigation in Abyan. He could not be interviewed for some time owing to his having been taken ill suddenly on arrival, but when interviewed, it was found that he had not the authority to treat in the matter. He, however, promised to obtain it. In the meanwhile, the Fadhli's took the law into their own hands, attacked the Lower Yafais and occupied Husn Helema and El-Husn. Sultan Abdul Qadir announced his victory in a letter to this residency to which a reply was sent reprimanding him for taking the offensive at a time when he knew that efforts were being made by me to reconcile the differences. Prior to the receipt of this letter the Fadhli's appear to have still further advanced and taken Ubar Jama and removed all the standing crops.

(c.) Abdali.

25. Owing to the continual sickness at Habil the British detachment there was removed in the first week of May, and the post handed over to the Abdali Sultan.

26. The differences between the Sultan Sir Abdul Karim and his cousins the sons of the late Sir Ahmad Fadl have been settled. The Sultan is sending me details of the settlement, and I shall refer to it again later. The Sultan of Mokalla, who is in Aden assisted in bringing about an adjustment of this quarrel.

(d.) Mokalla.

27. His Highness Sultan Sir Ghalib-bin-Awadth-el-Kaiti, the Sultan of Shehr and Mokalla arrived in Aden accompanied by Sultan Ali-bin-Mansoor as representative of both the branches of the Kathiri's of Hadramaut to have the Kaithi-Kathiri treaty ratified. The treaty was confirmed in my presence.

(e.) Wahidi.

28. On the death of Sultan Mohsin the Wahidi, his younger son Ali was elected Sultan of the tribe.

VI.—DEPARTURE OF MAJOR-GENERAL STEWART, C.B.

29. Major-General J. M. Stewart, C.B., General Officer Commanding and Political Resident, proceeded home on six months' leave on the 25th April, on which date I took over charge.

Yours, &c.

L. N. BEATTY, *Brigadier-General,*
Commanding Aden Field Force and Acting
Political Resident, Aden.

[79017/ME 44]

No. 22.

Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe to Earl Curzon.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 1125.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, May 25, 1919.

YOUR telegram No. 858 of 19th May: Courts in Turkey.

French Government have expressed their approval of formation of temporary tribunal, and have authorised French High Commissioner to proceed with its formation.

Italian High Commissioner has received no reply, but believes that his Government will concur.

As you are referring question to Peace Conference, British representative will be acquainted with exact terms of French proposal. I only raise the matter again in deference to desire of my French colleague, who attaches much importance to matter.

[85629/ME 44]

No. 23.

Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe to Earl Curzon.—(Received June 7.)

(No. 851.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, May 25, 1919.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 1125 of to-day's date, concerning the formation of a temporary judicial tribunal which has been proposed by the French High Commissioner, to which his Excellency appears to attribute a great importance, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a letter from his Judicial Adviser on the subject, enclosing a copy of the telegram which he sent to the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

I have, &c.

A. CALTHORPE,

High Commissioner.

Enclosure 1 in No. 23.

Judicial Adviser, French High Commissioner, to Mr. Hohler.

Cher M. Hohler,

Constantinople, le 22 mai 1919.

COMME suite à la décision prise ce matin au Conseil des Hauts-Commissaires, je m'empresse de vous envoyer copie du projet de télégramme que j'ai soumis à M. le Haut-Commissaire d'Italie, et que celui-ci a adressé depuis une semaine à son Gouvernement pour proposer l'institution d'un tribunal mixte temporaire, chargé de régler les différends entre sujets alliés et ottomans présentant un caractère d'urgence. Ainsi que vous le savez, ces sortes d'affaires ne sont susceptibles actuellement d'aucun règlement et restent en souffrance, au grand préjudice des intérêts alliés et vraiment à notre confusion à tous.

J'ai l'honneur de vous confirmer que le Gouvernement français a accepté pleinement la proposition dont il s'agit, que M. DeFrance lui avait soumise de son côté, à la suite de la réunion précédente du Conseil des Hauts-Commissaires. Il a autorisé M. DeFrance, ainsi que vous en avez été informé ce matin, à procéder d'accord avec les Hauts-Commissaires anglais et italien à l'organisation d'un tribunal mixte temporaire dans les conditions indiquées.

Je crois devoir vous rappeler que M. le Comte Sforza, bien qu'il n'ait pas encore reçu de réponse de son Gouvernement, estime que le Gouvernement italien accueillera la proposition.

Permettez-moi d'espérer que vous voudrez bien, en saisissant télégraphiquement le Gouvernement britannique de la question, lui signaler l'approbation du Gouvernement français et l'avis du Comte Sforza.

Veuillez agréer, &c.

[Signature illisible].

Enclosure 2 in No. 23.

Projet de télégramme des Hauts-Commissaires à leurs Gouvernements.

EN raison du nombre croissant des différends existant entre Alliés et Ottomans et de l'impossibilité de rétablir actuellement la juridiction mixte prévue par les Capitulations, les Hauts-Commissaires suggèrent l'institution provisoire à Constantinople d'un tribunal composé de trois juges : anglais, français, italien, et d'un quatrième juge désigné par le Gouvernement ottoman. Ce tribunal, qui serait présidé alternativement avec voix prépondérante par les juges anglais, français et italien, statuerait en premier et dernier ressort sur toutes les affaires civiles et commerciales entre étrangers et Ottomans présentant un réel caractère d'urgence. La loi applicable serait la loi locale, conformément à la règle établie devant les tribunaux mixtes. L'exécution serait assurée par la force publique interalliée. En cas de refus du Gouvernement de déléguer un juge à ce tribunal, celui-ci fonctionnerait avec les trois juges alliés seuls.

Je prie votre Excellence, si elle approuve cette proposition, de me donner plein pouvoir pour instituer ce tribunal provisoire et en régler le fonctionnement d'accord avec mes collègues d'Angleterre et d'Italie. Je signale l'urgence de cette institution à moins

que les Gouvernements alliés n'estiment la conclusion de la Paix avec la Turquie assez proche pour rendre inutile l'institution d'un régime provisoire.

Cette procédure aurait l'avantage de préparer l'établissement en Turquie d'une juridiction mixte composée de juges alliés et ottomans que les Hauts-Commissaires considèrent comme nécessaire pour remplacer après la guerre le régime suranné des Capitulations. Mes collègues télégraphient dans le même sens à leurs Gouvernements. Prière de répondre d'urgence.

[79984/ME 58]

No. 24.

Mr. Balfour to Earl Curzon.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 813.)

My Lord,

Paris, May 26, 1919.

M. TOPTCHIBASCHEF, President of the Azerbaijan Delegation to the Peace Conference, and M. Jalinsky, a Minister in the present Azerbaijan Government, and a member of the delegation, called on Sir Louis Mallet on the 23rd May, bringing with them M. Sakarof as interpreter.

2. They stated that they would submit a detailed statement of their desiderata in due course to the Conference and to this delegation. Their territorial desiderata appeared to comprise the two Russian departments of Elisabetopol and Baku. They asked whether His Majesty's Government would support their claim for a recognition of their independence, and whether there was any possibility of His Majesty's Government accepting a mandate for Azerbaijan. No hope was held out in the latter direction, and they were informed that their claim for a recognition of their independence and the question of mandates were not matters which concerned His Majesty's Government alone, but must be decided by the Conference. It was impossible to say when or in what manner, however, the question of the Caucasus was likely to be discussed by the Conference.

3. In reply to an enquiry as to their relations with the rest of Russia, M. Toptchibaschef stated that they did not expect a stable Government to be established in Russia for some time, but that they were prepared to await the march of events, and in the meanwhile hoped that the four separate Governments in the Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Daghestan) might form some kind of confederation on the lines of that formed in 1917 and destroyed by the Turkish invasion of the Caucasus.

4. In the course of further conversation the delegates emphasised their intention of dealing fairly with any racial minorities which might be left within the boundaries of their future State, and pointed out in this connection that, when they left Azerbaijan, the Armenians were represented in the Azerbaijan Government by three Ministers and twenty members of the Assembly.

5. In conclusion, M. Toptchibaschef paid a special tribute to General Thomson and the British military authorities, with whom the Azerbaijan Government had excellent relations, and from whom they had received advice and assistance. M. Toptchibaschef said that they had heard rumours of the departure of General Thomson and the withdrawal of the British troops, both of which possibilities they viewed with great misgivings.

6. The delegation intend shortly to visit London and to call at the Foreign Office.

I am, &c.

(For Mr. Balfour),

LOUIS MALLET.

[79017/ME 44]

No. 25.

Earl Curzon to Mr. Balfour (Paris).

(No. 3404.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 29, 1919.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 3198 of the 20th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith copy of telegraphic correspondence with His Majesty's High Commissioner at Constantinople* concerning the formation of a temporary mixed tribunal.

* Constantinople, No. 1125, Telegraphic; to Constantinople, No. 858, Telegraphic.

I venture to think that the relations between any provisional arrangement which might now be made, and the permanent judicial system to be provided for in the Treaty of Peace with Turkey, must necessarily be so intimate that this question can only be dealt with by the Peace Delegation.

I would accordingly request to be informed of any decision taken in this matter.
I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[86644/ME 44]

No. 26.

Mr. Balfour to Earl Curzon.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 931. Urgent.)

My Lord,

Paris, June 9, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to refer to your despatches Nos. 2136, 3198, 3404 and 3561 of the 10th April, 20th May, 29th May and the 2nd June respectively, regarding the question of the Capitulations in Turkey and the French proposal for the formation of a temporary mixed tribunal.

2. I concur in Admiral Calthorpe's view that there is no necessity for establishing any temporary régime pending the conclusion of peace with Turkey. This view is endorsed by Sir Adam Block. A copy of a minute written by him regarding the present situation as to the Capitulations is enclosed herein.

3. The régime to be established on the conclusion of peace must to some extent depend upon the decision of the Powers as to the future of Turkey, but whether a mandatory be appointed or not, it would seem necessary to provide in the treaty for the revival of the Capitulations. If Turkey is provided with a mandatory, the mandatory will presumably be responsible for seeing that an appropriate legal system is eventually established to replace the Capitulations. Similarly, if no mandatory is provided, it will be necessary to revive the Capitulations until a suitable legal system is established to take their place. It would probably therefore be advisable to provide, in the same instrument, for the appointment of an Inter-Allied Commission to study the whole question and make recommendations to the Powers.

I am, &c.

(For Mr. Balfour),

EYRE A. CROWE.

Enclosure in No. 26.

Minute by Sir Adam Block.

SINCE the Capitulations were abrogated, foreign subjects have been assimilated to Turkish subjects in respect of civil and criminal legal proceedings of all kinds. They have been amenable to the jurisdiction of Turkish Courts without any of the immunities and privileges provided by the Capitulations. The Turkish authorities have acted independently of the consular authorities in matters of arrest, "instruction" and execution of judgments, in fact at every stage of the proceedings.

The delay in the revival of former privileges and immunities in this period of transition does not appear to justify any immediate or hasty decision in the matter at issue. The High Commissioners are able to ignore any action of the Turkish authorities where a foreign subject is defendant, and in cases where he is plaintiff the case can be postponed until the general political problem of Turkey is solved by the peace terms. The Turkish Government might restore the former courts and procedure, and it might suit foreigners to profit from a return to the old system, but I would not advocate any encouragement to this effect, as the Capitulations are really out of date in their present form, and their revision has long been felt necessary. I would advise letting the matter wait.

Paris, May 26, 1919.

ADAM BLOCK.

[86644/ME 44]

No. 27.

Earl Curzon to Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe (Constantinople).

(No. 1001.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, June 13, 1919.

YOUR despatch No. 744 of 12th May: Inter-Allied Court.

Peace Delegation agree with you that, pending conclusion of peace with Turkey, there is no necessity to establish temporary courts.

Despatch follows.

[90450/ME 58]

No. 28.

Mr. Balfour to Earl Curzon.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 994.)

My Lord,

Paris, June 17, 1919.

I TRANSMIT to your Lordship herewith copies of a minute on a conversation with Colonel Stokes, who has just returned from the Caucasus. I should be glad to have the observations of your Lordship on this document, more especially on section 3 of the suggestions contained at the end in regard to the future of the Turkomans.

I am, &c.

(For Mr. Balfour),

EYRE A. CROWE.

Enclosure in No. 28.

Minute of Conversation with Colonel Stokes.

THESE notes may be taken in continuation of one or two previous conversations with Colonel Stokes:—

"Practically the whole of the Caucasus is against the British leaving and the Italians taking their place. The Italians, they say—

- "1. Are a poor nation and will exploit the Caucasus for their own ends;
- "2. Are without any world prestige or authority; and
- "3. Are an extremely socialistic people.

The Italian soldiers who come here will be Bolshevistically inclined, and the whole Caucasus will become Bolshevik in consequence.

"The three local Governments, however, will formally welcome the Italians. The republic of Azerbaijan, which at first intended to send a note of protest to the Peace Conference, saw that their own position would be prejudiced with the Italians in the event of the note not being accepted, and decided to take no action.

"I am told—although I do not have this on the highest authority—that the Italian naval people are opposed to taking over the Caspian. It would seem therefore that there are only two alternatives: either we should take charge of the Caspian, or hand it over to Denikin, who is at present incapable of holding it against the Bolsheviks.

"The former alternative is, I gather, completely ruled out. It is not probably generally realised how hazardous an operation at the present time is the holding of the Caspian by the forces at our command. Once Denikin gets into Tsaritsin Astrakhan will fall in its importance. On the other hand, if the Bolsheviks can come across from the Turkestan direction to the East Caspian shore they have great opportunities before them.

"I understand that Italy would accept a mandate for the country, if that mandate clearly defines the southern limit of Denikin's sphere. I do not imagine, for example, that it would be acceptable to them if he should come as far south as Derbent. The Georgians have literally been behaving like fools. At the same time I have little doubt that in a very short time we should have made something out of them and brought them into a reasonable frame of mind. The Italians are certain to have trouble with them. I still think that there is good prospect of a confederation of the three States under the pressure of events; they are realising that they must have a common customs, &c., and, as I say, I think they are now prepared to accept an Italian mandate sooner than be under Russia.

[4358]

G

"The Italians intend to send two divisions and a corps commander. They quite realise that the more troops they send at the beginning the better it will be; but this means shipping, which they maintain they cannot supply, in spite of the fact that they evidently have sufficient to send troops to Adalia and other places. They are beginning already to realise that they have got a good thing in the Caucasus. I am told by an English engineer that there are enormous anthracite deposits at Olti; his calculation was 150,000,000 tons."

I asked Colonel Stokes what he thought the condition of the three Republics was in comparison with his last visit of some months ago. He said that the Georgians were very much as they were before. The Armenian Republic had now a good President in Khatassian;* he is playing absolutely fairly with the British authorities, but the same cannot be said of some members of his Cabinet. The French have assisted in this. M. Chardigny, the head of a French Military Mission, and his aide, M. Poid-de-Bard, have been criticising the policy of the British in the Caucasus to the local authorities, and saying that it is not the policy of the Allies. I have no written proof of this but am inclined to credit it. In any case, what is the object of a French Mission in the Caucasus if the Italians have been offered a mandate there? Chardigny has also spoken against the Italians to Georgian and Armenian officers on the streets of Tiflis, saying that even the Portuguese would have been preferable to them.

"The Azerbaijanans have developed remarkably in the short time under our tutelage. General Thomson has taken the admirable plan of showing them with his own troops how to do things, as, for example, settle a strike, then later removing the restrictions on the Azerbaijan forces—(let them come into the town itself)—and giving them an opportunity of trying to handle things for themselves. Thus recently there was again a strike organised by the Bolsheviks as a protest against the continued prohibition of sending oil to the Bolsheviks of Astrakhan; the local authorities were counselled what to do, and they did it themselves to some purpose. Personally I have always had a particular liking for the Tartars, and think we could have made the most of them.

"The following three suggestions have been made to me by General Thomson, and seem to me worthy of consideration:—

"1. The Armenians may need Batoum as a port: Trebizond will not do for them, as it will not be possible to run a railway over the Pontic range.

"2. The Russians made a railway across Persian territory, Shahtakhti-Maku-Bagazib. This line will be essential to Armenia. The suggestion is that Persia should be invited to give up the triangle of country down to the Maku River, including the railway, and in exchange receive Leukoran and the Persian-speaking districts in the neighbourhood.

"3. The Turkoman people, let us say roughly, from Krasnovelak to towards Khiva, sent over a deputation to Baku asking the British to declare a protectorate over them. They said that if this was not done they would all migrate into Northern Persia to get away from Russia. If the scheme of a British protectorate is not possible, would it be possible for us to act as intermediary between these Turkoman emigrants and the Persian Government, offering the latter assistance in the shape of British officers to look after these Turkomans? If this were done we could quietly develop a strong force of fighting men on that frontier who would be useful in event of any later developments in the protection of India or against Russia. They intend to settle down along the northern frontier of Persia."

Every report that we have received about the Caucasus confirms the opinion held by many that this evacuation is a step whose consequences for us are apparently not fully realised. A policy with such a decided dash of cynicism in it—for it cannot be honestly pretended that the advent of the Italians there will be either for their own good or for that of the local inhabitants—is sure to recoil upon us sooner or later. The cost of running the Caucasus would begin to come back to us within five or six years. The Tartars in particular under British officering would have made an admirable local policing force in this region. The difficulty of maintaining our position in Mesopotamia, Persia and India will only be increased by the unrest certain to develop under the Italians in the Caucasus, and it will probably in the end come out that it would have been the cheaper and less distracting policy to have taken over the whole thing.

J. Y. SIMPSON.

Paris, July 7, 1919.

* M. Khatassian was Mayor of Tiflis when I was there in the autumn of 1916, and had the reputation of being a very able far-seeing man.

[92280/ME 44]

No. 29.

Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe to Earl Curzon.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 1306.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, June 20, 1919.

YOUR telegram No. 1001 of 13th June: Courts in Turkey.

French and Italians intend to telegraph requesting their Governments to urge on His Majesty's Government the need for a tribunal, which appears to be far more necessary in their colonies than in British.

They point out that, even if peace were to be signed immediately, it would be a matter of several months before any system could be established; that its character could be so formed, that it would act as an introduction accustoming minds of population to new system to be introduced. Suggestion is also made that neutrals might be allowed to place themselves under this jurisdiction; which they very probably would desire to do. French and Italian High Commissioners beg that, unless His Majesty's Government have very strong objections in principle, financial and economic interests of their subjects, which at present are suffering severely, may be taken into consideration. I informed them you were sending me a despatch dealing with the whole subject, but nevertheless they were most desirous that these views should be laid before you.

[86644/ME 44]

No. 30.

Earl Curzon to Mr. Balfour.

(No. 4194.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, June 25, 1919.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 931 of the 9th instant regarding the question of Capitulations in Turkey, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a telegram No. 1306 from His Majesty's High Commissioner at Constantinople,* who reports that his French and Italian colleagues are pressing for the establishment of a temporary tribunal.

I presume that a direct reply will be returned to Admiral Calthorpe.

I have, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[90450/ME 58]

No. 31.

Earl Curzon to Mr. Balfour.

(No. 4216.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, June 25, 1919.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 994 of the 17th instant, transmitting copy of a minute on a conversation with Colonel Stokes regarding affairs in the Caucasus and Transcaspia, I have the honour to state that the present position in Transcaspia can only be regarded as extremely uncertain. General Malleson has recently telegraphed expressing his opinion that if the Bolsheviks offered autonomy to the Turkomans they might gain over a large number of Teke, and probably the great majority of Yamut. If any of these Turkomans migrate into Persia and join the already very unruly Persian Turkomans, I am of opinion that General Thomson's suggestion referred to in section 3 of the minute would neither be feasible nor advantageous. If the present negotiations succeed, the British officers who are to organise the Persian army will be able to turn their attention to Northern Persia if it is found desirable that they should do so, but any particular scheme of protection for Turkoman emigrants would only lead to demands for similar treatment from other tribes, and would in any case seem to constitute a bad precedent.

The present moment, when the Government of India are seriously contemplating the possibility of having to withdraw our force from Meshed, seems scarcely suitable for entering into fresh commitments in that area with such notoriously unruly elements as the Turkomans.

I have, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[95375/ME 44]

No. 32.

Italian Chargé d'Affaires to Earl Curzon.—(Received June 28.)

(Translation.)

THE Italian Chargé d'Affaires presents his compliments to Lord Curzon and has the honour to state that his Government consider it opportune to establish at Constantinople a provisional tribunal for civil and commercial suits between Ottoman subjects and foreigners.

The Italian Government represent that the interests of the Italian colony in that region demand absolutely the institution of a tribunal of this nature, it being understood, of course, that the measure would be purely provisional and valid, only pending the decisions of the Peace Conference.

Signor Preziosi has the honour to express the sincere hope that His Majesty's Government will share the view of the Italian Government in this matter, and begs Lord Curzon to be good enough to move the competent authorities, with a view to securing the establishment of the tribunal. He thanks Lord Curzon, at the same time, for the steps which his Lordship may be good enough to take in the matter.

Italian Embassy, London, June 28, 1919.

[95378/ME 44]

No. 33.

Earl Curzon to Italian Chargé d'Affaires.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 2, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your *pro-memoria* of the 28th June, in which you state that your Government consider it opportune to establish at Constantinople a provisional tribunal for civil and commercial suits between Ottoman subjects and foreigners.

I venture to think that the relation between any provisional arrangement which might now be made and the permanent judicial system to be provided for in the Treaty of Peace with Turkey must necessarily be so intimate that this question should more properly be dealt with by the Peace Delegations in Paris.

I am accordingly transmitting a copy of your memorandum to Mr. Balfour.

I have, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[98663/ME 44]

No. 34.

Note communicated by M. de Fleuriau.—(Received July 5.)

LES Hauts-Commissaires français, britannique et italien à Constantinople s'étaient mis d'accord pour proposer à leurs Gouvernements l'adoption d'une organisation provisoire de tribunaux en Turquie. Cette organisation laissait subsister les tribunaux consulaires et créait un tribunal composé de quatre juges français, britannique, italien et ottoman pour les litiges entre Alliés et Ottomans. Le projet accepté par les Hauts-Commissaires a été approuvé par les Gouvernements français et italien. M. Pichon, constatant les difficultés résultant de l'absence de tribunaux à Constantinople, insiste auprès du Gouvernement britannique sur l'utilité que présenterait l'adoption du système provisoire à Constantinople.

Ambassade de France, Londres, le 5 juillet 1919.

[99068/ME 44]

No. 35.

Mr. Balfour to Earl Curzon.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 1213)

MR. BALFOUR presents his compliments to Lord Curzon and transmits herewith copies of telegram No. 51 to Admiral Calthorpe, Constantinople, dated 4th July, respecting the proposed temporary tribunal at Constantinople.

Paris, July 5, 1919.

Enclosure in No. 35.

Mr. Balfour to Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe (Constantinople).

(No. 51.)

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, July 4, 1919.

YOUR telegram No. 1306 of 20th June to the Foreign Office.

As at present advised, and in spite of delay in definite settlement with Turkey, I am not disposed to agree to establishment of a new tribunal.

I would, however, draw your attention to certain aspects of the matter. We are at present technically in a state of war with Turkey, and our relations with the Turkish Government during the period of the armistice are being conducted by three Allied High Commissioners. Our extra-territorial rights were, in our view and in that of the Turkish Government, although this view was not apparently shared by you and your colleagues, abrogated by the outbreak of war, and they will probably be revived in the Treaty of Peace.

It seems that the Consular Courts are at the moment functioning, though on what legal justification it is difficult to understand. It is now, however, proposed that the High Commissioners should establish, apparently with or without the consent of the Turkish Government, a court which is to have jurisdiction not only over Allied nationals but over Ottoman subjects.

It appears to me that such a court would have no legal basis, and if the Ottoman subjects concerned declined to carry out its decrees they would have to be enacted by such measures of force as the High Commissioners would be in a position to employ.

Apart from the legal and technical aspect of the matter, however, it seems unwise to establish a new régime, for, as we hope, a comparatively short period of time, when it is still uncertain what the precise political future of Turkey will be, and therefore whether the new régime is likely to be suitable to the form of Government established in Turkey after peace. Lastly, the fact that the Mixed Tribunals which it is proposed to establish are to be modelled on those in Egypt hardly seems a recommendation. The Mixed Tribunals were both a burden to Egypt and a source of difficulty to the occupying Power, and a tribunal of a similar nature might prejudice the ultimate development of Turkey.

I understand that in your opinion there is no urgent need from the point of view of British subjects for any change in the existing situation pending the peace settlement, even though the latter be delayed for some months. Please, however, let me have further information as to precise reasons why the Italians and French are pressing proposal, and whether in your opinion their nationals are really suffering from the present system.

[108569/ME 44]

No. 36.

Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe to Earl Curzon.—(Received July 26.)

[By Bag.]

(No. 142.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople.

FOLLOWING sent to Peace Delegation, Paris:—

"Your telegram No. 51 of 4th July.

"I presume my telegrams No. 1308 of 20th June and No. 1392 to Foreign Office were repeated to you.

"Consular Courts are not functioning, and my colleagues and I refuse to admit jurisdiction of Turkish Courts over subjects of Allied Powers. Consequently there are no tribunals working at all now except Ottoman Courts in cases concerning solely Ottoman subjects. This is naturally inconvenient, but with indefinite duration of armistice is fast becoming intolerable. I may add Inter-Allied Police Commission, which is presided over by British military officer, find it very difficult to deal with increasing problems arising from non-existence of tribunals to which foreigners are subject. French proposal is for court composed of four judges, one for each three Allies and one Turkish to administer local law, their judgments to be final, their jurisdiction to extend to all civil and commercial matters between foreigners and Ottomans, and their sentences to be enforced by inter-Allied public forces, full powers to be granted to the High Commissioner to regulate working of courts on these general

lines. Crimes or misdemeanours committed by Ottomans against foreigners or *vice versa* to be dealt with by consular officer of nationality concerned. They propose it should be of purely temporary character, and that careful provision should be made that it should not prejudice system that might be subsequently set up by mandatory Power.

"I am inclined to think that French and Italians have no *arrière-pensée*, but that their affairs are really suffering greatly through present abnormal state of affairs.

"Porte are being unofficially sounded by Italian delegate as to whether or not they are willing to participate in above scheme.

"My French colleague and my Italian colleague maintain that Capitulations were not suppressed *ipso facto* by outbreak of hostilities and that they remained in vigour, for instance, during Russo-Turkish and Balkan wars, though during Turco-Italian war it was held both by us and the Germans that Italians could not claim capitulatory rights, you will recollect also we have informed Porte that we entirely refuse recognition of unilateral annulment of Capitulations effected in 1914 (see my despatch No. 297 of 9th March). This point, however, seems purely theoretical, whereas difficulty now to be met is considerable.

"Please repeat to Foreign Office."

[108997/ME 44]

No. 37.

Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe to Earl Curzon.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 1539.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Constantinople, July 26, 1919.

MY despatch No. 744 of 12th May.

My French colleague desires me to recommend these suggestions to your favourable and special attention.

[110590/ME 58]

No. 38.

Lieutenant-Colonel Moggridge to Earl Curzon.—(Received August 1.)

Dear Lord Curzon,

War Office, July 27, 1919.

THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff desires me to send you the attached letter, which he has just received from General Holman. He wishes you to have it at the earliest possible moment, as it throws a new light on the question, which is coming up before an early meeting of the War Cabinet, otherwise he would have written to you himself. (See especially paragraph 12.)

Yours sincerely,

H. W. MOGGRIDGE.

Enclosure in No. 38.

Major-General Holman to Chief of Imperial General Staff, War Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Ekaterinodar, July 10, 1919.

I HAVE not yet had time to prepare a full report on the reaction of political questions on the military situation, but I consider it is necessary to draw attention without delay to a matter which is of great and immediate military importance, i.e., the taking of decisions by His Majesty's Government before giving General Denikin a chance of presenting his case and the communication of orders based on these decisions to the Transcaucasian Governments before they are communicated to General Denikin.

2. An example has recently occurred of this lack of co-ordination. General Briggs's appreciation of the so-called North Caucasus Republic Government was given in his telegram of the 13th April, which ended as follows:—

"I trust that His Majesty's Government will now decisively reject fantastic claims of Chermoev and similar political adventurers."

3. General Briggs's action was approved of by General Milne (*vide* his telegram of the 18th April), whose concurrence with General Briggs's report was further shown by his telegram of the 9th May, which marked his disapprobation of a communication made by the Officer Commanding Troops, Petrovsk, to the North Caucasus Government.

4. General Denikin's policy was to conciliate the stable representative elements of Daghestan and induce them to come into line with the other hill tribes who had accepted the form of tribal self-government under the Governor-General of Terek and Daghestan which he had offered them.

He believed, after General Milne's visit in the end of April, that he had in this the support and approbation of His Majesty's Government, who were aware of the immediate success of this policy with the other mountain tribes. It was therefore a great shock to him to learn of the laying down of yet another line, persistence in which would mean the abandonment of the stable anti-Bolshevik elements of Daghestan who had rallied to him.

5. General Milne was directed (*vide* telegram of the 6th June, a copy of which was afterwards sent me marked "for your personal information only") to inform General Denikin of the proposed line unless he had any serious objection, but, in repeating the gist of these instructions to me, he commenced his telegram of the 8th June: "In accordance with instructions received from Troopers, you are to inform General Denikin" Unfortunately the telegram was not received by me till the 15th June, though sent "Clear the line." I have since learnt that the instructions to the 27th division were sent "priority," but they must have reached Tiflis several days earlier, as, before they reached me, General Denikin had already complained that the officer commanding the Russian troops at Petrovsk had received following telegram from the officer commanding British troops at the same place:—

"Please transmit the following to General Dratzenko:—

"In accordance with the decision of His Majesty's Government affecting the affairs of the Volunteer Army, the troops of the Volunteer Army must remain behind a line which commences 5 miles south of Petrovsk and thence runs parallel to the Grozny railway to and along the frontier of Daghestan and then along the frontier of Daghestan and then along the frontier of the Tiflis Government."

6. The misunderstanding has thus been increased by badness of communications, but I think that the system of political control needs alteration.

7. In this case it was owing to the uncertainty of the nature and extent of Italian action in Transcaucasia that His Majesty's Government considered it necessary to lay down another line south of which General Denikin's troops should not go. The chief argument which was used with General Denikin, when His Majesty's Government first required him to observe the original line laid down and to endeavour to maintain friendly relations with the Transcaucasian States, was that the presence of British troops ensured his rear.

8. British troops and naval personnel are being withdrawn; operations at Astrakhan and communication with the Ural Cossacks render General Denikin's occupation of the Petrovsk-Derbent railway increasingly important; the gang of adventurers who claimed to be the Government of the North Caucasus Republic have disappeared, and General Denikin's representative and troops have been invited into Daghestan by the saner anti-Bolshevik elements of the tribes.

9. The sole facts calling for further restrictions of General Denikin's efforts to restore order in a portion of Ciscaucasia, so as to free himself from embarrassments in his rear and provide another contingent for the capture of Astrakhan, was the fear of the Azerbaijan Government that General Denikin had designs on the independence of that country. These fears are fostered by elements who are hostile to us, and are working not to bring peace in the Caucasus but disunion.

10. General Denikin has already asked us to communicate to the Azerbaijan Government his acknowledgment of their independence, but unfortunately, as this declaration was coupled with the undertaking not to cross the southern frontier of Daghestan provided the Azerbaijan troops did not undertake hostilities, it was not communicated to the Azerbaijan Government by the 27th division.

11. The Transcaucasian States, having been informed officially that General Denikin had orders to withdraw to the new line, will doubtless, when this is found impracticable, use his failure to comply as an excuse for themselves not complying with the instructions of His Majesty's Government. The case is analogous to that of Sochi,

where the General Officer Commanding 27th division, without any reference to General Denikin or this mission, gave the Georgian Government an undertaking that General Denikin would not advance in the Black Sea Province.

12. These misunderstandings are due to lack of co-ordination of political control, and I venture to suggest that it is essential, more especially as new factors will be introduced with the Italians, to appoint a sole British political representative for the Caucasus and South Russia. Such a representative, by personal dealings with the Transcaucasian States and General Denikin, would be able to ensure that Caucasian problems should be dealt with as a whole, and should see that the interests of those Russians whom His Majesty's Government are supporting in their efforts to establish a stable representative Government in Russia and prevent the spread of Bolshevism into Asia should not be allowed to suffer from the unfounded fears of the Transcaucasian States that General Denikin has designs on their independence.

I have, &c.

H. C. HOLMAN, Major-General,
Commanding British Military Mission, South Russia.

[108997/ME 44]

No. 39.

Earl Curzon to Vice-Admiral Sir A. Calthorpe (Constantinople).

(No. 1264.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, July 30, 1919.

YOUR telegram No. 1539 of 26th July: Inter-Allied Tribunal.

Your despatch No. 744 of 12th May was referred to Paris in my despatch No. 3561 of 2nd June to the Peace Delegation.

For Mr. Balfour's reply see my despatch No. 285 of 14th June.

See also Mr. Balfour's telegram No. 51 of 4th July to you.

[114090/ME 44]

No. 40.

Mr. Balfour to Earl Curzon.—(Received August 9.)

(No. 1552.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 8, 1919.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 4731 of the 14th July and to telegram No. 142 addressed to me by His Majesty's High Commissioner at Constantinople on 25th July, a copy of which was forwarded to the Foreign Office, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I am now prepared to agree to the temporary establishment of the tribunal whose composition and functions are explained in Admiral Calthorpe's above-mentioned telegram.

It seems essential, however, that Admiral Calthorpe should, in the first instance, be quite satisfied—

- (a.) That there will be no difficulty about enforcing the judgments of the new tribunal;
- (b.) That the Turkish Government consent to its creation and to its exercising jurisdiction over Ottoman subjects to the extent proposed; and
- (c.) That his French and Italian colleagues should formally agree that its creation is to be regarded as a purely temporary measure and in no way to be taken as a precedent for what may happen after the conclusion of peace.

If your Lordship concurs, I shall be glad if you would instruct His Majesty's High Commissioner accordingly, and at the same time inform the French and Italian Governments through the diplomatic channel of the substance of the instructions sent to Admiral Calthorpe.

A copy of correspondence with M. Pichon on this subject is enclosed herein.

I am, &c.

(For Mr. Balfour),
EYRE A. CROWE.

Enclosure 1 in No. 40.

Note communicated by French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

L'AMBASSADEUR de la République à Londres a signalé au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique, à une date récente, l'opportunité de hâter la constitution d'un tribunal mixte provisoire à Constantinople.

Le Foreign Office vient de faire savoir en réponse à M. Paul Cambon que la question est actuellement étudiée par la Délégation anglaise à la Conférence de la Paix.

Le Ministère des Affaires étrangères croit en conséquence devoir appeler toute l'attention de son Excellence Mr. Balfour sur le danger qu'il y aurait à laisser plus longtemps les ressortissants alliés en Orient dans l'impossibilité d'obtenir le règlement des litiges auxquels ils se trouvent être actuellement partie; la situation présente a en effet pour résultat de paralyser dans une très large mesure la reprise des affaires avec l'Empire ottoman; elle motiverait, d'autre part, au cas où il n'y serait pas promptement porté remède, une telle accumulation d'affaires en suspens que la juridiction provisoire qui devrait ensuite connaître de ces affaires risquerait de se trouver matériellement hors d'état d'en assurer le règlement.

Le Département se permet en conséquence d'insister de la façon la plus pressante sur l'urgent intérêt qu'il y aurait à ce que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté donnât son adhésion aux propositions suivantes qui ont été établies d'un commun accord par les Hauts-Commissaires britannique, français et italien à Constantinople et que les Gouvernements de Paris et de Rome ont déjà agréées:

"Les tribunaux consulaires subsistant en droit entre étrangers de même nationalité ou de nationalités différentes, le règlement des litiges entre Alliés et Ottomans comporte seul une institution spéciale. Pour ces litiges, un tribunal serait créé, composé d'un juge français, un anglais, un italien et un juge désigné par le Gouvernement ottoman. La présidence comportant voix prépondérante serait exercée alternativement par chacun des trois pays alliés. Le tribunal jugerait sans appel toutes les affaires civiles et commerciales urgentes entre étrangers et Ottomans. Comme devant les tribunaux mixtes, la loi applicable serait la loi locale. L'exécution des jugements serait assurée par la force publique interalliée. Si le Gouvernement ottoman refusait de déléguer un juge à ce tribunal, celui-ci procéderait avec les trois juges alliés seuls."

S. G.

Paris, le 26 juillet 1919.

Enclosure 2 in No. 40.

Mr. Balfour to M. Pichon.

MR. BALFOUR presents his compliments to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, and in reply to his Excellency's note of the 26th July regarding the proposed establishment of a temporary mixed tribunal at Constantinople, has the honour to state that the British Delegation have informed His Majesty's Foreign Office that, subject to the latter's concurrence, His Majesty's High Commissioner at Constantinople may be informed that no objection is seen to the establishment of the proposed tribunal provided Admiral Calthorpe is satisfied that—

- (a.) There is no difficulty as to enforcing the judgments of the proposed tribunal;
- (b.) The Turkish Government consent to its creation, and to its exercising jurisdiction over Ottoman subjects to the extent proposed; and
- (c.) If his French and Italian colleagues formally agree that its creation is to be regarded as a purely temporary measure, and in no way taken as a precedent for what may happen after the conclusion of peace.

His Majesty's Foreign Office have been asked to inform the French and Italian Governments of the substance of the instructions eventually sent to Admiral Calthorpe in the matter.

August 6, 1919.

[115218/ME 58]

No. 41.

Director of Military Intelligence to Foreign Office.—(Received August 12.)

THE Director of Military Intelligence presents his compliments to the Acting Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and begs to forward, for his information, a copy of a report on conditions in the Caucasus by General Bridges, dated the 26th July.

War Office, August 11, 1919.

Enclosure in No. 41.

Notes on Present Conditions in the Caucasus.

(Secret.)

THE outstanding feature of the present conditions in the Caucasus is the racial conflict between Christian and Mussulman. This has been held in abeyance by British occupation. A strong subterranean current is, however, running. It is fed by the machinations of Tartar, Kurd, and Turk, and by the agents of the Committee of Union and Progress, probably directed by Enver Pasha himself, who has been fairly conclusively proved to be in the district of Karabak. Perhaps, indeed, we should look further afield for the directing hand, as Mussulman disorders throughout the world appear to be co-ordinated. Day by day the outbreak grows nearer and more certain. Small sporadic conflagrations appear wherever Mussulman agents are gathered together. These have been signalled at such places as Shusha, Gerusi, Nakhichevan, to the south of Erivan, about Kars, at Olti, at Erzeroum, Trebizond, Samson and Kerasun. Nobody with whom I spoke in the country differed from the opinion that, when we relinquish our occupation, an outbreak was inevitable which would put the clock of civilisation back for another generation.

There seems to be no doubt that the Turks are endeavouring to profit by the situation for a double object: compensation for Allied encroachments in other parts of Turkey, and revenge on the Greeks and Armenians.

Enver has been condemned to death, but no price has yet been set on his head. He is said to have £ T. 30,000 always with him. This would seem a fitting price, and he would be worth as much to us.

2. It should be made clear to America, or any country proposing to take a mandate for Armenia, that nothing can be done without troops.

In existing circumstances the repatriation of Armenians into Turkish Armenia is quite impossible until the area in question has been evacuated by the Turkish army and occupied by Allied troops. The numbers required depend on the area to be occupied, the quality of the troops, and the mechanical devices at their disposal. Given the moderate project, apparently the most likely to be undertaken, i.e., with frontier including Trebizond, Erzingan, Bitlis and Van, the numbers are estimated both by British authorities and the Armenian Prime Minister (M. Ktissian) as 15,000 men. Colonel Chardigné, head of the French Mission, who knows the problem well, puts the numbers necessary at 12 battalions of infantry, 1 regiment of cavalry on local horses, 3 batteries of mountain artillery, 1 battery field artillery, a squadron of aeroplanes, armoured cars, a few tanks, and strong motor convoys.

All on the spot are agreed that to repatriate the 400,000 available Armenians into Turkish Armenia before the country has been properly policed in this fashion, is to deliver them into the hands of the enemy and to invite massacre.

The Kurds have been inclined to help rather than hinder, except where they are under Tartar or Turk influence, or where efforts are being made to repatriate Armenians into Kurdish territory.

3. Ktissian had no fears for Russian Armenia if allowed a modicum of Allied officers for the gendarmerie and a small number of Allied troops to support the local forces. The latter number 17,000; they are short of ammunition, and they are tired. They guard a perimeter of 580 kilom., and they are required to help in the harvest. Assistance therefore would be required at once. In fact, it is continually asked for. The situation at Nakhichevan requires intervention. We have a small detachment moving from Tabriz to Tiflis which will pass through Nakhichevan, and perhaps temporarily steady the situation.

4. The new Armenian State, if it ever becomes a reality, proposes to have Batoum and Trebizond as ports. Ktissian would like to see Batoum a free port under British control, which would mean the control of the province of Batoum by the British. Armenia would then run her railway to Kars—not through the mountains as was projected before the war, but skirting them and running partly through Turkish Armenia, which would shorten the estimated time required for construction to two years instead of five. The Trebizond-Erzeroum railway is also projected, but presents very great engineering difficulties. There is a project to establish the capital near Lake Van, but it is understood that Erzeroum is more generally favoured.

5. In none of the provinces of Transcaucasia is Italian occupation looked on seriously. Owing to lack of prestige it is not considered that they would be able to combat the Mussulman influence. It was rumoured that they had discovered in the unexploited Crown lands at Baku good possibilities for recouping themselves for any outlay they may have to make. Generally speaking they are not expected, and one of the Azerbaijan Ministers told me that at Baku the Bolsheviks would forestall them.

6. At the present moment the state of the country otherwise is satisfactory. We hold it by prestige. It says a great deal for the British troops that have been in occupation that life and property are safer to-day than they have ever been. Whatever we say "goes," and I doubt whether the British Government is aware of the extraordinary high level at which our prestige stands in these outskirts of civilisation. This may be ascribed partly to the energy and devotion displayed by all ranks in this ungrateful task, and partly to the fact that our officers do not dabble in trade and are obviously disinterested. If we cared to take hold and rule this province it could be done now with a minimum of effort and expenditure and a maximum of efficiency; and although there is a great deal of grumbling—for instance, at Tiflis—the people would at bottom be glad to be ruled, and our evacuation will cause consternation. Two British divisions (part Indian, as the Indians are a success) are sufficient to keep the whole country in order until Russia finds her feet or some other solution than delivering these provinces to anarchy can be devised. Transcaucasia is a rich country, and can easily be made to pay for its police force.

7. When the time comes to hand over the Caspian Fleet to Denikin, publish the new boundary line between Denikin and Azerbaijan* and to evacuate British troops, an awkward situation will arise. There is no doubt, from what Melik Aslamoff, the Director of Communications in Azerbaijan and leader of the Pan-Islamic Party, told me, that we should be regarded as traitors, and there may be an attempt to treat us as such; in fact, the rearguard might have some difficulty in getting away unless very firm measures are taken, and might possibly have to make an undignified exit by sea through Persia. I do not regard this as very probable, owing to the aforementioned state of our prestige. I fancy we can take liberties with the people, but it may be necessary to talk to the Azerbaijan Government in a fatherly way, as all these countries are adepts at construction, and a railway strike would be very inopportune. General Cory thought it might be necessary, in case of a railway strike, to keep the workmen in our pay and to feed them—a matter of some 200,000*l.* expenditure. Moreover, Baku has a sinister reputation. There is a large and evil population there; 20,000 Christians were murdered in the streets during the past year, and, should the Tartars get out of hand, the troops would not make their way out without great difficulty.

8. It is, perhaps, worthy of note that nomad Tartars have practically had to fight their way up to the hills this year with their flocks in Karabak. This movement, the cessation of which would spell famine and disaster, has to be carried out under almost active service conditions. Russia used to devote two divisions to this biennial migration. Karabak is one of the danger spots. It is the cradle of the Armenian race, and the Tartars would dearly love to get hold of it. It has been on the verge of conflagration for weeks past, but held in check by our presence.

9. The fact that Denikin is laying claims to Batoum, and may shortly be doing the same to Baku and to Tiflis, does not tend to stabilise the situation or contribute to the happiness of the local functionaries, who have nearly all guilty consciences. Most of them, however, have feathered their nests sufficiently to make an exit before their position becomes critical. The result will be chaos. There is a very large amount of

* This gives Daghestan to Denikin, and was to be promulgated on the 4th August. No doubt an excellent boundary, but the Azerbaijan Government had already been told that the British Government had ordered Denikin to go back to the previously given line, which was to constitute the frontier. General Cory, who is naturally very jealous of our good name, considered that, however necessary, this could only be regarded by the Azerbaijanians as a breach of faith on our part and a sign that we favoured Denikin's encroachments.

oil products stored at Baku waiting for transport to its natural markets in Russia via Astrakan, and one of the chief grievances of the Azerbaijani is that he has not been allowed to trade with the Bolsheviks. This, and also the fact that Baku will probably turn Bolshevik again, seem sufficient reasons for Denikin to occupy the place at once on the grounds of military necessity.

10. Georgia and Azerbaijan have federated themselves with a view to resisting Russian aggression. This is rather as if the sheep combined to resist the wolves. It would seem that nothing but foreign occupation could prevent them from again becoming Russian provinces. Armenia, who has refused to join the federation and who relies entirely on the good graces of the Great Powers, may have a longer lease of life, but it is not easy to see how she can possibly preserve her independence without substantial help and the assistance of Allied troops. In fact, unless some Great Power takes a mandate for Armenia, she cannot exist any more than Georgia or Azerbaijan.

T. BRIDGES, *Lieutenant-General*.

July 26, 1919.

[115270/ME 44]

No. 42.

M. de Fleuriau to Earl Curzon (left with Sir R. Graham, August 12.)

M. DE FLEURIAU remercie Sir Ronald Graham de sa note du 11 avril indiquant que, dans l'opinion du Gouvernement britannique, la question de l'établissement d'une juridiction provisoire à Constantinople devait être traitée par la Conférence de la Paix à Paris.

C'est cette Conférence qui doit établir le régime judiciaire de la Turquie, régime qu'il est impossible de ne pas mentionner dans le Traité de Paix ottoman. Sur ce point, M. Pichon désire attirer l'attention du Gouvernement britannique, dont les représentants voudraient renvoyer toute réorganisation judiciaire en Turquie à la Société des Nations. Cette procédure entraînerait de longs délais et retarderait la reprise des affaires en Turquie, au détriment des ressortissants alliés. Elle aurait aussi, pendant un certain temps, pour résultat de priver les ressortissants des nouveaux États, Polonais, Tchèques, &c., de tout recours à une juridiction en Turquie. M. Pichon insiste donc sur les inconvénients des retards que comporterait le renvoi à la Société des Nations de la réforme judiciaire en Turquie.

*Ambassade de France, Londres,
le 12 août 1919.*

[114090/ME 44]

No. 43.

Earl Curzon to Rear-Admiral Webb (Constantinople).

(No. 1339.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, August 13, 1919.

YOUR telegram No. 1539 of 26th July: Inter-Allied Tribunal.

The matter has been reconsidered by British Delegation. No objection is now seen to temporary establishment of tribunal, described in your telegram No. 142 of Peace Delegation, but before agreeing you should be quite satisfied:—

- (a.) That there will be no difficulty in enforcing judgments of new tribunal;
- (b.) That Turkish Government consent to its creation and to its exercising jurisdiction over Ottoman subjects to extent proposed;
- (c.) That your French and Italian colleagues formally agree that it is to be regarded as a purely temporary measure and in no way to be taken as a precedent.

[114090/ME 44]

No. 44.

Earl Curzon to French and Italian Ambassadors.

Your Excellency,

Foreign Office, August 13, 1919.

WITH reference to my note of the 11th instant (2nd ultimo), concerning the proposal to establish a provisional Inter-Allied Tribunal at Constantinople, I have the

honour to inform your Excellency that under instructions which I have now received from His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State in Paris, I have informed His Majesty's High Commissioner at Constantinople that His Majesty's Government see no objection to the temporary establishment of this tribunal, subject to the following three conditions:—

- (a.) That His Majesty's High Commissioner is satisfied that there will be no difficulty in enforcing the judgments of the proposed tribunal.
- (b.) That His Majesty's High Commissioner is satisfied that the Turkish Government consents to the creation of this tribunal and to the exercise of its jurisdiction over Ottoman subjects to the extent proposed.
- (c.) That the French and Italian (Italian and French) High Commissioners formally agree that the creation of this Tribunal is to be regarded as purely a temporary measure, and that it is in no way to be taken as a precedent for the judicial régime to be established after the conclusion of peace.

I have, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[125033/ME 44]

No. 45.

Political Resident, Aden, to Earl Curzon.—(Received September 4.)

(No. C. 6.)

Sir,

Aden, August 15, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, three copies of the fifth Aden news letter, dated the 15th August, 1919, to his Excellency the High Commissioner, Cairo.

I have, &c.

L. N. BEATTY, *Brigadier-General*.

Enclosure in No. 45.

Fifth Aden News Letter.

Political Resident, Aden, to High Commissioner, Cairo.

(Secret.)

Your Excellency,

Aden, August 15, 1919.

I BEG to submit a brief report on the political situation in the Yemen in continuation of my previous news letter of the 21st May, 1919:—

I.—THE IMAM.

(a.) *The Tehama.*

The imam's agent, Sayed Yahya-ed-Dhari, with 750 Zeidis of the Arhab Hashid and Bekil tribes, has succeeded in occupying Zabid, where he was met by local notables headed by Sayed Ahmad-el-Ambari. Sayed Yahya-ed-Dhari took charge of the Secretariat and expelled Yusuf Hassan from the office, and ordered the recovery of octroi dues on the Turkish scale. Later on a number of Zabid notables were put in prison without any reason being assigned. Sayed Muhammad Shara'an, the principal Director of Waqfs at Zabid, was also put in gaol on being replaced by Muhammad-ibn-Muhammad-el-Mizjaji. Loan was asked for from the Zabid merchants, but the amount subscribed was very trivial. Detachments of Zeidi troops despatched to outlying districts for recovery of taxes, where by the way they were reported to have been committing great excesses, were attacked and routed by the inhabitants of Tahita, Mua'Sala and Karashia districts of Zabid. The sheikhs of Suh also refused to accept Zeidi troops. Sayed Yahya-ed-Dhari attributes this attitude of the people to their disinclination to paying taxes owing to the famine.

2. As a result of the set-back received by Zeidis at the hands of the inhabitants of Tahita, &c., some 200 men of the Zabid force deserted. Sayed Yahya-ed-Dhari called them cowards and reported that he was feeding them well and paying them one-eighth of a dollar daily. The men on the other hand complain that they are given jowari and oilcake instead of wheat, ghee and honey promised to them.

3. Sickness is also reported to have broken out amongst the Zeidi soldiers at Zabid, resulting in thirty deaths in twelve days. Large numbers of sick are being sent to Wasab for a change of air, but very few return to duty.

4. The inhabitants of J. Buraa offered hostages to the imam as a mark of submission, but when these were being escorted to Menakha by Zeidis, the inhabitants attacked the escort and recovered their hostages.

5. Sheikh Manassar Sagheer Zarnuqi, whom the imam has appointed Kaïmakam of B. Fakih and promised to send troops and arms, is looked on by the inhabitants of northern quarter of B. Fakih with disfavour. Kassim Hassan Makbool, secretary of Sheikh Manasser Sagheer, was waylaid and killed on the 15th June because he was supposed to have instigated the sheikhs to ask for Zeidi troops for service in B. Fakih district. The roads in this sheikh's territory are unsafe and his own tribesmen are the chief cause.

6. Constant reports are being received by the Political Officer, Hodeida, about the imam's threatening to take punitive action against the Saiyyeds of Marawa and other people (Quhra, &c.) intriguing against him in the Tehama, but he has taken no definite steps yet to put his threats into force. Coupled with the above reports are rumours of Yusuf Hassan (recently appointed Governor of Hodeida) instigating the Zaranis and the imam issuing secret instructions to Quhra and Aboos tribes to attack and loot Hodeida, with the aid of Zeidi troops from Sanaa. These sheikhs wanted a small body of Turks with guns to attack Hodeida. No reliance is placed on these reports, but they are being mentioned for what they are worth. The Quhras do not appear to have finally sided with the imam, as they refused to proceed to Ubal to meet Mohammed Ahmed Mashoor of Hujjeilla, who had gone to Sanaa to discuss their relations with the imam and returned with his reply. On his side Muhammad Ahmad refused to proceed to Bajil. The Quhras have also protested against the recovery of tithes by the imamic agent at Hujjeilla from there.

Subsequent report shows that Sheikh Ali Salami arrived at Bajil as imam's representative to confer with Abu Hadi and Co., and, as a result, it has been decided that out of 1,000 troops stationed at J. Buraa 200 men with one gun should for the present be despatched to Bajil, and the rest to be kept as a reserve under the orders of the commandant at Bajil. Sheikh Ahmad Salami, brother of Sheikh Ali Salami, has been appointed commandant at J. Buraa, and Sheikh Ali Salami will command the troops in Bajil. One Mohamed Nouri has been appointed Kazi of Bajil and Mutessarif of Hodeida.

7. Sheikh Abu Hadi and a Bajil merchant, Muhamad Danish, have been awarded medals by the imam in appreciation of their services [?].

(b.) Upper Yemen.

8. The Arabs of Sanaa are not satisfied with the imam judges and other officials. The custom duties levied in Sanaa are said to be enhanced daily.

9. The Khaulanis are reported to have defied the imam's soldiers sent to capture a murderer residing at Hussanain. An expedition compiled of 800 trained Arabs under Sharif Abdulla-ed-Dumain, one company of Turkish troops under Lieutenant-Colonel Kinan Bey, ten other Turkish officers, three guns and twenty-five gunners, which was reported to have been dispatched against the recalcitrants, succeeded in its mission and captured all the sheikhs and aquils who were anti-imam. Sharif Abdulla and Kinan Bey have returned to Sanaa.

10. Recruiting for the imam's army was believed to be brisk, but owing to good rainfall in the hills it has lately suffered. The imam has succeeded in defeating the inhabitants of Wasab-el-Ali, and has occupied the country. Wasab-el-Asfal is also reported to have reluctantly submitted, and the imamic commander is plundering the country all round.

11. It appears that the imam realises the importance of educating people in medicines and surgery, and has opened a medical school in Sanaa on the 1st June, 1919, under the principalship of Colonel Aziz Bey, lately principal medical officer of Turkish forces in the Yemen.

12. A census of the population of Sanaa was also ordered for purposes of taxation. The prices of cereals and other commodities are abnormally high.

13. It is stated that the imam is collecting old Turkish coins and converting them into a new coinage of his own.

14. The imamic agent at Soofal Anakil is reported to be collecting a tax of 1 dollar per camel passing through to Aden. The customs collectors at Kataba are Turks, but the income there is so meagre that these officials were reported to be contemplating to resign and proceed to Aden.

15. Another report has it that the imam's agents come over to Sanaa (south of Kataba and within the limits of the British protectorate) to recover dues on caravans. The latest news says that Kataba, Nadar and Sanaa are full of imamic soldiers.

16. The imam summoned Sheikh Saleh-bin-Saleh-el-Taheiri and others for a conference, but did not extend his invitation to the chiefs of Kataba and Al Nawa. It is stated that his intention is to advance on Mures and Shairi country. Mures lies across the border, but Shairi country is within the limits of our protectorate.

Hubesh.

17. According to a report from Muhammad Nasir Muqbil, the imamic forces under Sheikh Ali-bin-Al Wazir which were sent against the Hubesh met with a stout resistance, but the treachery of one of the Hubesh sheikhs, named Hamood Abdur Rab-bin-Sanaa, who handed over some forts garrisoned by his people to the Zeidis, brought about the discomfiture of the Ahl Hubesh. From another source it appears that the Zeidis suffered heavy casualties at the hands of the Ahl Hubesh before the latter surrendered.

It appears that there have been three Zeidi attacks on J. Hubesh, in which about 4,000 Zeidis, with one gun, took part. Their commander-in-chief was Saif-el-Islam Ahmed-bin-Kasim, who is nicknamed "Saif-el-Harim" (sword of the women) by the Shafais. The Shafais were led by Haj Muhammad Aidth, who was elected for the purpose at a meeting at El Kaada by Shafai chiefs, including, among others, Muhammad Nasir Muqbil, Saeed Ahmad Pasha of Taiz, Ali Abdulla, &c. Ismail-ba-Salama of Ibb appears to be on Zeidi side, but was said to be secretly in sympathy with the Shafais league, whom he supplied with arms and ammunition.

GENERAL ATTITUDE.

18. In spite of reports from our agents in the protectorate to the contrary, the imam's general attitude has been friendly. His correspondence with our protégés mainly consists of requests to safeguard the trade routes and protect the travellers, and up to now no act of actual aggression against our people has been reported. With regard to the proposed mission of Colonel Jacob to the imam, the latter telegraphed assuring us of the success of the visit, and has promised to provide suitable escort and to receive Colonel Jacob with all honour. No fears are entertained on this account therefore, and it is to be sincerely hoped that all questions will be amicably discussed and settled.

Idrisi.

19. The Political Officer, Hodeida, reported the despatch of S. Hadi Rizk, formerly deputy for Bet-el-Fakih in the Ottoman Parliament, to Midi by the inhabitants of that district to invite the Idrisi to occupy and administer their country. Aboo Talib, ex-Kadi of J. Reima, S. Ali Na'ami, Juneid Mashrai and Muhammad Ali Mashrai have also been reported to have gone to the Idrisi for the same purpose.

20. The Arabs in the Zaidiya district are reported to be dissatisfied with the Idrissian representative, Sharif Muhammad-bin-Zaid. Sayyed-el-Baghdadi, of Marawa, went to Zaidiya to settle the differences between Shereef Muhammad-bin-Zaid and Sheikh Abdulla Mashoor, of the Mushabira tribe.

21. The Idrissian agent in Zaidiya is reported to have established a strong post at Dair-al-Mahal, on the Zaidiya-Hodeida road, to ensure the trade routes through Hashabira country. Other posts are also under consideration.

22. It was reported sometime back that the imam was moving large quantities of grain from the mountains via the Mahweit towards Idrisi country, with a view to military operations against the Idrisi. Since nothing has happened to justify the report, and the Idrisi has also shown no apprehension on this account, the report is believed to be false.

23. The Political Officer, Hodeida, reported that Shereef Mansur arrived as Idrissian Amil at Bajil, but had to run away owing to the intention of the Quhras to capture and send him to the imam. The Idrisi denies that he is taking any steps of this kind to extend his rule over the Tehama, but there is no doubt that the people who go to see him on the subject receive no discouragement. It is reported that the people of Bet-el-Fakih were trying to have the Friday "Khutba" read in the name of the Idrisi.

24. Sayed Mustapha-el-Idrisi has been taking great interest in organising the custom and other administration of the country, and has appointed some ex-Turkish officials to carry on the work.

Mahmud Nadim, ex-Vali.

25. Mahmud Nadim appears to be still exercising a certain amount of influence and authority, as the Tehama people refer to him for orders, assistance, advice or information. Recently he stopped the entry of newspapers, &c., sent by the Political Officer, Hodeida, into the hill districts, asked Abu Hadi of Bajil to stop letters from Turkish prisoners of war in Aden and Egypt to their relations in Sanaa informing them of the good treatment they were receiving at the hands of the British Government; the appointment of Monassir Sagheer to the Kaïmakamate of B. Fakih was brought about by him, and various other things. He carries on active propaganda to show the people that the Turks will return to Yemen. Our secret news agent at Sanaa is responsible for the report that the Turkish officers now in Yemen would surrender themselves to the French, but never to the British. The continuous stay of Mahmud Nedim is rather inexplicable. At first it was believed that the ex-Vali was playing a double game in the matter of his departure from the Yemen. To us he showed himself powerless and unable to leave Yemen without the imam's permission, at the same time representing to the imam his inability to leave Yemen without an authority from the Porte. Steps were taken some time ago to forward a copy of Grand Vizier's telegram on the subject to the imam. From a communication of the imam it appears that it is the imam who is detaining him. As a private individual the presence of Mahmud Nedim in Yemen does not in any way affect us, in fact, he may prove a restraining influence to the excess of the Zeidis, but as a propagandist for Turkish intrigues in the country he is an undesirable person. A split has occurred between the Turkish civil and military officials now in Sanaa, one party being Mahmud Nedim's and the other of Raghîb Bey, ex-Governor of Hodeida, whose appointment as commandant at Bajil by the imam was opposed by Mahmud Nedim. The imam has forbidden both parties to hold their meetings owing to constant dissensions between them, and is reported to have also reduced the allowances of the civil officials from 400 to 300 dollars monthly.

Hujjariyah.

26. Sheikhs Abdulla Abdul Rahim-bin-Qassim and Ahmad Amin-bin-Qassim, representatives of the *de jure* ruling family of Hujjariyah, came in to ask for help against Abdul Wahab Noman, the present Kaïmakam of Hujjariyah, who had supplanted their family a few years back. They stated that since the departure of the Turks, Abdul Wahab Noman had lost much of his prestige, but he has guns with which he maintains his power. He got one gun from the Turks and another from Ali Othman. They also stated that the imam had been writing to Abdul Wahab Noman claiming the country, but he has been sending evasive answers. These men themselves are anti-Zeidis. They were definitely told that nothing could be done for them, and the Government did not intend to interfere in Hujjariyah politics.

Sheikh Mohamed Hassan and Ali Othman.

27. Muhammad Nasir Muqbil of Mawia reports that Hassan-bin-Qasim Aboo Ras and Sheikh Hassan-ed-Do'ais of Ba'dan are trying to conciliate Sheikh Mohamed Hassan and Ali Othman. They interviewed the belligerents, obtained hostages from the contending parties and directed them to attend before Ahmad-bin-Qassim, the Saif-el-Islam at Ibb, where the Kadi of Taiz, S. Ahmad Pasha, Sheikh Abdulla-bin-Yahya and Kadi Abdul Aziz have also gone for the purpose. It is understood that Sheikh Mohamed Hassan has also arrived at Ibb, but Ali Othman's arrival has not yet been reported.

28. It was reported some time ago that a Zeidi force under Sheikh Hassan had gone to Moza to take possession of the four Turkish guns in possession of Ali Othman. Their actual removal has not been yet heard of, but it is pretty certain that the imam had them in view. Ali Othman, who wants to derive some benefit out of these guns, sent his brother to the imam and his brother-in-law to Perim to find out what they could obtain for handing over the guns to either party. Abdulla Zoor, who came here for the purpose, was offered 1,000 rupees to cover the cost of transport, &c., of the guns to the sea coast, but he asked for 10,000 rupees. As no good could be served by spending such a large sum, Abdulla Zoor has been informed that under the terms of armistice the guns legally belonged to us, and we did not consider it necessary to pay

anything to get them. He could therefore depart as soon as he liked. A Hodeida report says that Ali Othman has refused to hand over the guns to imam's emissaries that were sent to receive them.

Muhammad Nasir Muqbil of Mawia.

29. This chief is now reported to be really not ill-disposed towards the imam personally, whose agent, Saif-el-Islam, has been making overtures to him, but he would not like to see Zeidi troops or administrators within his limits. It is stated that Muhammad Nasir pays about 3,000 to 4,000 dollars monthly to the imam, but this is doubtful. Muhammad Nasir Muqbil has not come to terms with S. Ahmed Pasha.

30. Naji-bin-Saleh Al Footahi, of Doba (near Ad-Doreja), who came here sometime ago to ask for British protection, stated that though the Shafais sheikhs have confederated against the imam, they would not mind paying him certain amounts periodically provided he left them alone.

PROTECTORATE.

Haushabi.

31. Muhammad Nasir Muqbil lately sent a present of 200 dollars and 100 kadahs of grain to the Haushabi sultan, which tends to show the existence of friendly relations between these two chiefs. The Haushabi has paid several visits to Mawia.

Amiri.

32. The Amir of Dala is building a "dar" at Ras-al-Haid, and he has been presented with 60 kadahs of grain, worth about 350 dollars, and the Dala people, Ahl Bilah Ashraf and others have also given him assistance in grain, money and goats.

33. Shairis raided a caravan composed of Ahl Mures and Belad-el-Ashraf, and carried away the loot. Casualties occurred on both sides. A few days later the Ahl Mures retaliated by waylaying and robbing a Shairi caravan from the Yemen.

34. Muqbil Abdulla-el-Koteibi, a nephew of the Koteibi sheikh, whose conduct during the war has not been satisfactory and who has now been trying to gain favour of this residency, has announced that he will guarantee the safety of caravans using the Mashwara Pass, but that he could not be responsible for those using the Hardata Pass. The Haushabi sultan has, on the other hand, notified the merchants and camelmen that he ceases to be responsible for the caravans who use the Mashwara route and get robbed. Both have an eye on the dues, however, and, taken as a whole, the routes cannot be called safe.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Mecca.

35. A report was spread in the Tehama on the 2nd May, 1919, by the Sayyeds of Zaidiya, on the authority of one S. Murtaza (who had arrived there from Jeddah), of severe fighting at Mecca and of Jeddah having been invested by Ibn Saeed's men.

Ahmad Rushdi.

36. Ahmad Rushdi, a Turk by origin, but born and bred in Taiz, was a clerk in the Turkish Judicial Court of Hodeida and for two years before the armistice confidential secretary to the ex-Vali Mahmud Nadim. He came to Bajil about four months back and then went to Jizan, ostensibly to find service, but apparently with ulterior motives. The Idrisi appointed him a clerk in the Custom House, but after a time Ahmad Rushdi resigned and came to Aden, where he was confined pending enquiry into his antecedents. A letter was received from Sayed Mustapha-el-Idrisi, stating that Ahmad Rushdi was concerned in a theft case in the Custom House at Jizan and asking that he should be sent to that place, which was done. The man, however, threw himself overboard near Kamaran and was drowned.

Yusuf Hassan.

37. He was kaïmakam of Zabeed till recently, when he was turned out by the imamic commander. This man has, since our occupation of Hodeida, been busily engaged in inciting the Arabs against us and his anti-British propaganda has only been second to that of Mahmud Nadim in this country. Notwithstanding this, he requested through a Greek merchant of Hodeida for permission to reside in Hodeida till the conclusion of peace without being made a prisoner of war, saying that he was a

native of Lebanon. A few days later he telegraphed congratulating the imam on his victories in Wasab and Zabid, adding that this occupation would be an object lesson to the enemy in Hodeida and curb his ambitions, and hoping that imamic troops would be a protection to the country and a means of ejecting the enemy from Hodeida. Yusuf Hassan is now said to be thinking of quitting Yemen with Mahmud Nadim, if possible.

BLOCKADE.

38. Reports continue to be received of a regular illicit dhow traffic between Assab, Jibouti and the Arabian coast in contravention of the blockade. The merchants of Aden have several times represented the hardship they are undergoing for want of shipping facilities and requesting for a removal of the blockade.

SHIPPING.

39. The number of Japanese ships visiting Aden is increasing. The following number of ships entered during June and July last :—

June : 7 ships with a total tonnage of 21,322.
July : 19 ships with a total tonnage of 49,297.

It is interesting to note that in one month the number increased from 7 ships to 19, with the corresponding increase in the tonnage from 21,322 to 49,297.

The number of British ships which entered Aden during the same period was as follows :—

June : 41 ships, total tonnage, 137,894.
July : 42 ships, total tonnage, 129,441.

Yours, &c.
L. N. BEATTY.

[121930/ME 44]

No. 46.

Rear-Admiral Webb to Earl Curzon.—(Received August 28.)

(No. 1437.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, August 16, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a letter dated the 9th August, received from the Serbian delegate, with reference to the benefits of the Capitulations being applied to Serbians, and of my reply thereto.

I have, &c.

RICHARD WEBB,
Acting High Commissioner.

Enclosure 1 in No. 46.

Serbian Delegate to British High Commissioner, Constantinople.

Excellency,

Constantinople, August 9, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to hand you enclosed two summonses sent by the Turkish Tribunal of Stamboul to Messrs. Costi Stephanovitch and Ilija Jacovlievitch, Serbian subjects, the last condemned in default to four months' prison or £T. 400 penalty.

Conformably to the advice which your Excellency has communicated me concerning the re-establishment of the Capitulations in Turkey, and as our subjects must be surely condemned unjustly by the said tribunal, the lawsuits in question being entered by Turks, I beg your Excellency to kindly give the necessary order for suspending these lawsuits till new order.

I have, &c.
[Illegible.]

Enclosure 2 in No. 46.

British High Commissioner to Serbian Delegate.

Sir,

Constantinople, August 16, 1919.

WITH reference to your letter No. 123, dated the 9th August, referring to the case of two Serbians who have been served with summonses, I have the honour to inform you that it is considered that Serbians are not entitled to the benefit of Capitulations at the present time and in the existing circumstances, and to return the summonses herewith.

I have, &c.

RICHARD WEBB,
Acting High Commissioner.

[120560/ME 44]

No. 47.

Rear-Admiral Webb to Earl Curzon.—(Received August 25.)

(No. 1717.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Constantinople, August 25, 1919.

YOUR telegram No. 1339 of 13th August.

I have now discussed this with my colleagues.

Condition (a) is fulfilled owing to existence of inter-Allied police; (b) Turkish Government agree in principle, though suitable formula has yet to be found; (c) this is quite distinctly understood by all parties.

It becomes necessary that His Majesty's Government should send out immediately suitable official to represent us on tribunal.

From what I am told there seems no doubt but that Mr. Peter Grain, if available, would be most suitable person.

[126879/ME 58]

No. 48.

Mr. Wardrop to Earl Curzon.—(Received September 8.)

(No. 4.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tiflis, September 4, 1919.

GEORGIAN Minister for Foreign Affairs, acting for Prime Minister, who is ill, asked me to-day to give him an opportunity of explaining present situation, and I had with him a conversation of which he has promised to hand me a written memorandum which I shall communicate to you by bag.

The following is substance of his remarks :—

Owing to fact that military authorities have been the only representatives of His Majesty's Government in Georgia, the Government, to their regret, have not been able to get into close touch with Great Britain though, during his short stay, General Cory has succeeded in establishing something like normal relations. To him they made certain proposals (see telegram to War Office from General Headquarters, Constantinople, No. 16690 of 4th August), to which they eagerly await an answer.

Though Georgia is well able to preserve internal order, she could not cope with an attack from outside.

In her present situation she must have the support of some Great Power, and only possible orientation for her is British. She cannot stand alone; she begs Great Britain to help her, and she wishes to know what compensation she could give for this indispensable aid.

The departure of British troops is causing greatest anxiety to Georgians, who fear that an attack from outside may ruin their country. She has already addressed to British Government appeals for retention of some of British troops; these might be at any place in Transcaucasia, even in Armenia if necessary. She also requests assistance by supply of food and general merchandise in exchange for her own produce, and would be grateful for financial expert advice. As regards Batoum and its districts, these would fall into a state of anarchy on withdrawal of our army, for there has been no regular administration, municipal or judicial, for some time, and many undesirable persons have found their way there. Georgian Government are ready to take over

[4358]

I 2

administration, but they offer to His Majesty's Government complete control over port as a naval base or coaling station.

I refrain from commenting at length on above at present, but I venture to renew the respectful objections which I made before leaving London to complete evacuation of Transcaucasia. Even a small force at Batoum would be of greatest use, and in view of our new relations to Persia it would seem most desirable to keep at least a footing in this country, the present importance and possibilities of which it would be difficult to exaggerate.

The present Government is, to the best of its ability, repressing all Bolshevik tendencies due to a few Jews and other foreign propagandists, who find very little sympathy amongst Georgians, who are quite as well fitted for self-government as many of the European peoples.

The British troops of all ranks are popular here, and are sorry to leave.

[132885/ME 44 A]

No. 49.

Acting Political Resident, Aden, to Earl Curzon.—(Received September 23.)

(No. C. 7.)

Sir,

Aden, September 6, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, three copies of the sixth Aden news letter, dated the 4th September, 1919, addressed to his Excellency the High Commissioner, Cairo.

I have, &c.

C. H. B. LEES,

Lieutenant-Colonel.

Enclosure in No. 49.

Sixth Aden News Letter.

Acting Political Officer, Aden, to High Commissioner, Cairo.

(Secret.)

Your Excellency,

Aden, September 4, 1919.

THE following is a brief report on the political situation in the Yemen since the date of the last letter on the subject, i.e., the 15th August, 1919.

THE IMAM.

The Tehama.

1. Since the occupation of Zabid by the imamic forces, the imam's agent there has been trying to extend his influence in the surrounding country. On the 24th July, 1919, Syed-Abdullah-bin-Ahmad Ibn-el-Wazier effectively occupied Jabel-Ras and took hostages on behalf of the imam. He has written to the sheikhs and akils of Hais summoning them to Marir (the market at the foot of Jabel-Ras) for negotiations. He has been appointed by the imam to organise and establish administrations at Mokha, Khokha and Jabel-Ras, and has also been nominated Amil of Mokha.

On the 29th July, 1919, a force consisting of 300 Zeidi troops, 100 Arabs raised in Zabid, and 200 tribesmen from Sooh, with one gun, under the command of Syed Ahmad Alambari, a local magnate of Zabid, advanced against the Muasala, and after four days' severe fighting completely routed their opponents, who were commanded by Syed Ali Tahir and a certain Dawood Ibra. Syed Ali Tahir was compelled to take refuge in Huseiniyah in the heart of the Zaraniq country, where he is seeking the support of the Zaraniqs for a further effort against the Zeidis.

The Zeidis are said to have burnt and looted the village of Muasala after committing atrocities. They are supposed to have carried away booty in cash and jewels worth about 7,000 Austrian dollars, besides considerable quantities of grain and animals. Syed Ahmad Alambari returned to Zabid with his force and one gun, leaving 200 men behind in the Muasala village under Abdur Rahman, brother of the principal sheikh of that district.

The Zeidi troops, by their excesses in the conquered territory, have made themselves extremely obnoxious to the Tehama people, who were already averse to them on

account of the religious differences between the Tehamates and the highlanders (i.e., the Shafis and the Zeidis).

The Quhra tribe is still unreconciled to the imam, and appears to be taking active steps to resist any advances of the imamate troops in their country. According to a report of the Political Officer at Hodeida, it is evident that recently a reconciliation has taken place between the Quhra and Aboos tribes, which had hitherto been at enmity with each other for a considerable number of years, and in view of the present situation in the Tehama this is certainly a significant fact. Their object appears to be to present a united front to all the efforts of the imam in their territory.

On the morning of the 11th August the Quhra sheikhs wired to the imam notifying that if he did not stop his advance on Bajil they would appeal to the European Powers for protection. No reply was received from Sanaa, telegraphic communication being interrupted later in the day owing to heavy rains in the mountains. Next day they (not including Abu Hadi Humeda of Bajil) sent an ultimatum to Sheikh Ali Salami, the imam's agent at Zabid, informing him that if he and his Zeidi troops did not evacuate Ubal by the morning of the 13th August, 1919, their tribesmen would attack them. But on the intervention of Abdul Kadir of Marawah, Abu Hadi and other Quhra sheikhs, in a conference at Buha, decided to suspend hostilities and negotiate with the imam and await his reply.

The Zaraniqs.

A recent report from Hodeida says that differences between Sheikh Manassar of the Northern Zaraniq clan and Mohamed Saeed and other sheikhs and akils of the same tribe have been settled amicably. Sheikh Manassar has promised to act in accordance with the wishes of the tribesmen in general, and to desist from inviting the Zeidis to occupy their country. Syed Mohammed-ed-Dhari, having asked Sheikh Hassan Yahya Fashiq, the chief sheikh of the Zaraniq, to tender allegiance to the imam, another meeting of the Northern and Southern Zaraniq clans was held, in which it was decided to resist the imam. The sheikhs are said to have been in favour of being placed under the protection of a foreign Power.

Mokha.

During the month of May last, Sheikh Mohammad Hassan attacked and captured Mokha, but abandoned it very shortly afterwards. He then tried to capture Mauza, which was held by Ali Othman, but failed to do so. On the 29th July, 1919, it was reported at Hodeida that Sheikh Mohammad Hassan was again preparing to drive Ali Othman out of Mokha, which the latter had reoccupied on the former's withdrawal, and subsequently to attack Mauza as well. But Sheikh Mohammad Hassan's efforts to recapture Mokha and Mauza failed ignominiously, and Sheikh Ali Othman is still in possession of both the places, though Mokha is said to be practically deserted, there being not more than twenty to thirty men of the population left in it, the sheikh himself is living at Mauza.

Taiz.

No reports have yet been received about the Zeidis reaching Taiz, although they are already in occupation of Ibb and Jabal Hubeish. But it is reported that the people are living in constant fear of the Zeidi peril. A great deal of rivalry is said to exist between Sayed Ahmad Ali Pasha, the mayor of Taiz, and Kadi Abdul Aziz, a local notable, both desiring ascendancy in the Taiz district.

Hujjariyah.

According to a report received in Hodeida on the 13th ultimo a fight took place on the 18th July, 1919, in Jable Habashi district, between Abdul-Wahab, the present kaimakam of Hujjariyah, and another sheikh of the same place, named Hizam, assisted by Nuruddin, brother of Sheikh Mohammad Hassan. Abdul-Wahab's party is said to have lost twenty men, while their opponents lost about fifteen.

THE IDRISI.

1. Asir.

The Idrisi has fixed a salary for the principal sheikhs of Ebha. Hassan-bin-Aziz is getting 100 Austrian dollars per mensem, as well as one-third of the tithes collected by him. On Hassan's requisition, the Idrisi has sent him a large sum of money to

defray the expenses of bringing the Turkish war materials down to Jizan. Ibn-Abdur Rahman, a former Turkish Bin Bashi and a cousin of Husan-bin-Aiz, has been twice to the King of Hedjaz at Mecca since the Turkish evacuation of Asir, and the Idrisi is consequently very suspicious of his movements. Even Hassan-bin-Aiz does not seem to be satisfied with his cousin's conduct, and has preferred several complaints about him to the Idrisi. The Idrisi has written a strong letter to Hassan to put an immediate stop to his cousin's suspicious activities, otherwise he will hold him responsible for everything done by Ibn-Abdur Rahman.

The Idrisi seems to be taking a lively interest in the organisation and training of his army, and has employed an ex-Turkish Bin Bashi, Salim Bey—a Sharif and Arab by origin—for this purpose.

2. Tehama.

The strength of the Idrissian troops stationed in the Zaidiyah district, including Dahi, is estimated at about 1,500. They are under the command of Sheikh Mohammad-bin-Zaid of Zuhra.

Sheikh Hadi Haij, Hadi-al-Makrani, Shereef Mansoor visited Zaidiyah and received hostages from the Sulail, Allawayia, Beni Mohummad and Kaleaya tribes, on behalf of the Idrisi, and sent them over to the Amil of Zaidiyah to be kept in safe custody till they are despatched to Sabia.

The Idrisi does not intend to advance on the Lower Tehama beyond Zaidiyah without our consent, but if he does, there is no gainsaying the fact that he will be welcomed everywhere in the Shafai country, and he can confidently count on the support of the Mansabs of Marawah, Munira and Hadadiyah. The tribes of Quhra, Aboos, Zaraniq and Beni Mukatil are also pro-Idrisi and anti-imam.

Famine.

A very severe famine is raging in practically the whole of the Tehama. Dura grain is said to be selling 5 rupees per saa (about 16 lb.). The conditions in Buajia country behind Lohaiya are still worse. On account of these acute conditions the people have taken to holding up caravans and travellers and committing robberies.

Ibn-i-Saud.

According to a report of Captain M. Fazluddin, I.M.S., *liaison* medical officer with the Idrisi, Ibn-i-Saud's agents arrived in Sabia on the 12th ultimo and brought letters from him to the Idrisi. Ibn-i-Saud has expressed a desire to enter into friendly relations with the Idrisi. Captain Fazluddin does not think that the Idrisi is likely to take any active steps against the King of Hedjaz in conjunction with Ibn-i-Saud without the full knowledge of the British Government.

Aden Protectorate.

The Saqladi sheikh of Shaib reports that he has received letters from the imam's representative at Kataba asking him to tender his submission to the imam, or be in readiness for fighting.

I think this report is probably false. I have, however, asked him to send to me the letter he alleges to have received from the imam's representative.

It is reported that the imamic representatives at Kataba have made arrangements with Kaid Saleh, the nephew of Sheikh Mohammad Nasir Muqbil, to the effect that Kaid Saleh should send a party of his men to As Sarir, a village near Jebel-Jihaf, which village is to be used as the base for their operations against our nominee Syed Mohammad Taha of Jebel-Jihaf. As a result of the above arrangements 100 men are said to have left Kataba for Jebel-Jihaf, but Syed Mohammad Taha prevented them from entering the village of As Sarir.

Hodeida.

On the morning of the 30th August last we received the following telegram from the Officer Commanding, Hodeida, through Kamaran:—

"At 5 this morning an Arab force estimated 250 or 300 attacked, rushing the Arab piquet and passing through city, attacked hospital and supply and transport godowns, taking Masharaf Gate. Though great difficulty was experienced in clearing the city, all attacks were driven off. There were about twenty enemy casualties. Our casualties: killed, eighteen; wounded, eleven. By next boat a written report is being sent."

In reply, the Officer Commanding was asked for an immediate report of the conditions, &c., and informed that a reinforcement was ready for immediate despatch if required.

Next day the following telegram was received:—

"It is reported by sheikhs of Mandar that from Beit-el-Lareisa other attacks are impending. Man-of-war and reinforcements are considered necessary."

On this the Officer Commanding, Hodeida, was informed that:—

"On the 2nd September the man-of-war will arrive and the following reinforcements are being sent, and should arrive there late on the 2nd September: 250 infantry, 3 machine guns, one section ten-pounder gun."

Further reinforcements are ready, and can be supplied whenever necessary.

A full report of the situation at Hodeida is expected shortly, and in its absence it is hard to say what is the real cause of the Arab raids on Hodeida. It is, however, surmised that these attacks are initiated by some of the anti-imam Tehama tribes, e.g., Quhra, partly to intimidate Colonel Jacob's Mission, whose aim they consider to be the furtherance of the imam's cause to their own detriment, and partly they may be ascribed to the general famine conditions prevalent in those parts. As I have already noted above, the famine conditions in the Tehama are very acute and raids and robberies are being reported from most of places.

A cursory view of the situation at Hodeida leads us to conclude that the Arabs probably succeeded in tampering with the loyalty of the Arab police who were guarding the supply and transport stores and the hospital, rushed the place and might have tried to carry away the supplies. Full details will be forwarded as soon as received.

Colonel Jacob's Mission.

Colonel Jacob's Mission left Aden early on the morning of the 14th August last and reached Hodeida on the 16th. Shortly after his arrival at Hodeida, Colonel Jacob sent in the following information:—

"The imam's escort has failed to get through to Hodeida, but a conference is proceeding between his representatives and those of Al Quhra at Bajil. Abu Hadi of El Quhra advises that no advance should take place until the matter is definitely settled. He is quite friendly."

Colonel Jacob, however, expressed every hope of an amicable settlement of these negotiations.

The mission left Hodeida on the afternoon of the 21st August, 1919, under the escort of Al-Bagawi and Abu Hadi of the Al Quhra tribes, and it was hoped that they would be met by the imam's escort at Bajil. On the 29th ultimo a wire to the following effect was received from the Officer Commanding, Hodeida, through Kamaran:—

"Communication with Bajil has been resumed. Two telegrams, both dated the 27th August, have been received from Colonel Jacob:—

"1. We hear that in order to settle our advance the Vali is coming.

"2. The chiefs have prevented our return by removing camels. On the 26th a telegram was received from the imam stating that he is taking all necessary steps to settle difficulties, and assures us that there is no cause for anxiety on our part."

On the same day, the following telegram was received from Bajil, addressed to your Excellency through me:—

"1. Owing to the blockade there is marked distress in the Tehama. Everywhere the people blame us alone, and my position and influence have been adversely affected by this.

"2. In spite of previous orders from Paris, and regardless of whatever may be settled with the imam, I cannot urge too strongly the immediate raising of blockade.

"3. We have paid the piper and we alone should call the tune. Our prestige will be enhanced immeasurably by such a concession. The blockade was intended to hit the Turks, although the Arabs were prime losers."

"4. Any further retention of blockade will be read by Arabs as breach of faith with them, and will prejudice our cause and our claims to be the most interested Power in the country's future.

"5. I am temporarily held up by the Quhra sheikhs from going to imam, but the ex-Vali is coming down from the imam to treat for continuance of our journey to Sanaa.

"6. The presence of a British envoy, to the exclusion of those of the Allied Powers, is regarded by the people here as an attempt on our part to advance the cause of the imam to their own detriment. Negotiations are still proceeding. All members of the mission are well."

Colonel Jacob has been informed by telegraph that the blockade has been raised. After the above date no further news of the mission has yet been received.

In view of the present situation at Hodeida, and owing to the fact that nearly all the tribes in the Shafiet Tehama are anti-imam, and they are under the impression that our chief aim is to advance the cause of the imam to their own detriment, as admitted by Colonel Jacob in his above telegram, a certain amount of anxiety is entertained about the safety of the mission, but this is lessened owing to the repeated assurances of the imam, his efforts to settle difficulties, the coming of the ex-Vali Mahmud Nadim to Bajil to treat for the continuance of the mission journey, the general sanguine tone of Colonel Jacob's telegrams and the raising of the blockade.

Any further news about the mission will be duly telegraphed to your Excellency as soon as received.

Yours, &c.
C. H. B. LEES.

[129081/ME 44]

No. 50.

Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck to Earl Curzon.—(Received September 15.)

(No. 1813.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, September 13, 1919

AT High Commissioners' meeting on 10th September questions connected with Capitulations were discussed. We are insisting as a general principle on precise re-establishment of *status quo ante bellum*, and we raised question of subjects of *ante bellum* Serbia and Montenegro, who did not enjoy Capitulations. French Commissioner took view that it seems to us unthinkable at the present time, that inter-Allied police should assist in enforcing against subjects of these two countries judgment of Turkish, that is, enemy courts. We pointed out with considerable emphasis that no Ally had suffered more or had been more loyal than these.

It was decided to refer matter to Peace Conference, so that question may not be lost sight of, and fullest possible privileges may be accorded to Serbians.

(Confidential.)

Italian High Commissioner showed bitter hostility to our proposal, which would otherwise have been put in force immediately.

Please repeat to Paris.

[135241/ME 44]

No. 51.

Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck to Earl Curzon.—(Received September 30.)

(No. 1684.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, September 15, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a letter, dated the 13th September, addressed to his Excellency the Greek High Commissioner, and of a joint note addressed to the Sublime Port by the Allied High Commissioners, relative to the status of Hellenic subjects as regards Capitulations.

I have, &c.

J. M. DE ROBECK,
High Commissioner.

Enclosure 1 in No. 51.

British High Commissioner to Greek High Commissioner.

Sir,

Constantinople, September 13, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a joint note which has been addressed to the Sublime Porte by the High Commissioners for France, Great Britain and Italy defining the status of Hellenic subjects as regards Capitulations.

2. The inter-Allied police is being instructed to interfere only on behalf of those who can support their Hellenic nationality by identity papers issued by the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I have, &c.
(For High Commissioner),
RICHARD WEBB.

Enclosure 2 in No. 51.

Joint Allied Note to Turkish Government.

EN rappelant à la Sublime-Porte le contenu de leur note du 30 janvier dernier, les Hauts-Commissaires de France, de Grande-Bretagne et d'Italie ont l'honneur de lui confirmer que les sujets hellènes ont droit au bénéfice des Capitulations dans les mêmes limites et conditions qu'avant la prétendue abolition du régime capitulaire en 1914 par le Gouvernement jeune-turc.

Ils tiennent à ajouter que, dans le cas où l'autorité ottomane prétendrait exécuter contre les Hellènes des jugements rendus en violation de ceux des privilèges capitulaires dont ils jouissaient avant la guerre, la gendarmerie interalliée recevrait mandat de s'y opposer.

A. DEFRANCE.
RICHARD WEBB.
MAISSA.

Constantinople, le 10 septembre 1919.

[126879/ME 58]

No. 52.

Sir J. Tilley to Mr. Winston Churchill.

Dear Mr. Churchill,

Foreign Office, September 17, 1919.

YOU were good enough to say this morning that if I would send you over an expression of Lord Curzon's opinion about Batoum you would give orders for the evacuation of the town to be deferred. I therefore enclose extract of a departmental memorandum, at the end of which is a copy of Lord Curzon's minute. I hope this may be sufficient. I know that he was contemplating the possibility of some "mitigation" of the evacuation of the Caucasus pending further information about the French movements, but as to Batoum he gives this very definite opinion.

Yours sincerely,

J. A. C. TILLEY.

P.S.—I have also written to Lord Curzon this evening.

J. A. C. T.

Enclosure in No. 52.

Extract of Foreign Office Memorandum respecting Batoum.

IT has been suggested that Batoum should be retained in British military occupation, with a Governor and escort. This is supported by General Milne, who advised leaving one regular British battalion to garrison Batoum, a flight of aeroplanes to prevent a scramble ensuing for the province on our evacuation, and the appointment of a commissioner, with a guard.

In favour of this solution, it may be represented that if we evacuate Batoum entirely its possession will certainly become an object of strife between Denikin, with

his Volunteer Army, and the Georgian Government at Tiflis. Denikin will be tempted to overstep the limits set on his sphere of influence, and the equilibrium of all Transcaucasia will be upset. Conflict with the Volunteer Army can hardly fail to drive the Georgians into the arms of the Bolsheviks.

An additional argument for retaining Batoum under our control is the fact that the port affords the most convenient access to the Armenian Republic, in the event of intervention by British or other Allied forces being determined upon.

Similarly our mission at Tiflis will be left in an exposed and isolated position, and its influence will be correspondingly weakened if we lose control of this port.

EASTERN DEPARTMENT.

Minute by Earl Curzon.

I am on the whole in favour of a continued but temporary occupation of Batoum by the British, since it seems to me the only way to avert disaster.

C.

[131980/ME 58]

No. 53.

Mr. Wardrop to Earl Curzon.—(Received September 20.)

(No. 20.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tiflis, September 19, 1919.

YOUR Lordship's telegram No. 10 of 11th September.

I believe Germans are trying to send not only consul but a duly accredited diplomatic representative to this country, whose independence, as you are aware, was long ago recognised by them.

It will put Georgian Government, who have never been so friendly towards England, in a very awkward position if German officials, consular or diplomatic, succeed in reaching Tiflis, and I hope this may be prevented, for general public are overwrought and impatient at waiting so long for a sign from us, and might in despair welcome any outside offer of assistance, especially as Germans were on their good behaviour here and perfidiously posed as friends and protectors of Georgians against the Turks.

Municipal authorities have already received from Germany numerous tempting offers of water-pipes and other material for which nine months' credit would be given. So far, only goods actually received from Germany were those ex steamship "Christian Indeed," bought last year.

Germany is also trying by every possible means to attract young men to her educational and technical institutions, but, on the other hand, ten youths are leaving as soon as possible for England for technical training at their own expense with a British officer at present here; many more would go, but journey and cost of living and teaching are appreciably higher than in Germany.

Whole future of this country seems to me to depend upon speedy action calculated to clear political atmosphere by some authoritative statement on the part of His Majesty's Government or Allies generally regarding political future of Transcaucasia. It would be sufficient if this were a merely provisional recognition of *de facto* Governments, subject to final decision by Peace Conference, but with some assurance that acts of republics would not be disavowed.

This would result in—

(a.) Flow hither of British capital, which is only waiting for some guarantee of reasonable safety to take up great industrial and commercial schemes announced, which would immediately steady exchange. I understand there are in circulation about 1 milliard roubles of paper currency, which, at present rate, are equal to only about 2,000,000/., while one concession alone, in which Crisp has been interested for several years (electric work connected with Aragva and Saliek Rivers), is estimated to require about 15,000,000/.

(b.) Complete establishment of public order and security for life and property. I should mention that impartial observers like Captain Gracey are deeply impressed by enormous improvement in this respect which has taken place since this republic declared its independence. Within last few days it is true there have been daily attacks on railway trains; but this is mere organised provocation, which is being vigorously dealt with, e.g., 800 Bolshevik Osets, Jews and Russians have been arrested, I am informed, during last few days, and a very drastic policy, including military law for railways, is on the point of being adopted.

Agrarian question is a contributory fact to this unrest, for if once peasants knew Government was recognised as competent to deal with land-ownership they would readily pay tax, which, under Bolshevik influence, they are now frequently indisposed to do, and they would themselves see to suppression of brigandage. At present agitators (yesterday a Russian monk was arrested at Gudaut with a large supply of Bolshevik propaganda and letters from Denikin's army to well-known intriguers in Batoum) tell buyers of land that their titles are worthless, as Denikin will come here and restore monarchy and reactionary rule.

Your Lordship is well aware that, despite ratification of peace with Germany, that country is determined to carry on war against us here by political and economic methods, and it would seem desirable that public of Great Britain should be made fully aware of this fact. German agents are busy with most unscrupulous propaganda against us, using Bolsheviks and Jews for the purpose, and they are also trying underhand way to capture trade and secure concessions. We need experienced financial and commercial men of standing to cope with situation. It is urgent that we should stimulate British manufacturers, merchants and capitalists to come in and dominate this market, where they would be received with open arms.

Italians have officially offered to provide free of charge twenty experts to advise all the departments of the Georgian Government, but latter, realising that this is merely disguised manoeuvre on behalf of German (who has already begun introducing his goods under Italian marks), have declined offer. They have been also offered a regiment to garrison Batoum, if we evacuate that place.

Vigorous action on the part of His Majesty's Government can alone save this country from falling into orbit of Germany.

We have now an excellent chance which we may lose by procrastination, thus jeopardising our prestige and power in Persia and East generally.

Recognition of republics seems to me matter of urgency. Whatever may happen to Russia, I venture to take view that independence of Transcaucasia (which Germany and Turkey have already recognised as far as Georgia is concerned) is a British interest of prime importance for the sake of India and Persia, where Russia in future, whether she be under German influence, or Bolshevik or Denikinist, will inevitably give us continual trouble.

[137562/ME 44]

No. 54.

Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck to Earl Curzon.—(Received October 6.)

(No. 1676.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, September 2^d, 1919.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1684, dated the 15th September, relative to the status of Hellenic subjects under the Capitulations, I have the honour to forward herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a joint note, dated the 18th September, addressed to his Excellency the Greek High Commissioner by the Allied High Commissioners on this subject, and also communicating the decision taken regarding the liability of Hellenic subjects to "temettu" tax.

I have, &c.

J. M. DE ROBECK, High Commissioner.

Enclosure in No. 54.

Joint Allied Note addressed to Greek High Commissioner.

LES Hauts-Commissaires de France, de Grande-Bretagne et d'Italie ont l'honneur de faire savoir à M. le Commissaire de Grèce, en réponse à sa lettre du 8 du mois dernier, qu'ils ont adressé, à la date du 10 de ce mois une note collective à la Sublime-Porte pour lui rappeler que les sujets hellènes ont droit au bénéfice des Capitulations dans les mêmes limites et conditions qu'avant la prétendue abolition du régime capitulaire en 1914 par le Gouvernement jeune-turc. Ils ont ajouté à ce propos que la gendarmerie interalliée recevrait mandat, le cas échéant, de s'opposer à l'exécution contre des Hellènes des jugements rendus par les tribunaux ottomans en violation des privilèges capitulaires.

[4358]

K 2

Quant à la question de l'application du traité à vos ressortissants, dont M. Canelopoulo a bien voulu entretenir les Hauts-Commissaires alliés par sa lettre du 2 de ce mois, elle était controversée avant la guerre entre le Gouvernement hellénique et la Sublime-Porte. Elle offre, d'autre part, un intérêt beaucoup moins grand que la précédente.

Les Hauts-Commissaires ne croient pas pouvoir, dans ces conditions, exercer une pression à ce sujet sur la Porte.

A. DEFRANCE.
J. M. DE ROBECK.
MAISSA.

Constantinople, le 18 septembre 1919.

[136080/ME 44]

No. 55.

Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck to Earl Curzon.—(Received October 2.)

(No. 1737.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, September 22, 1919.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 1813 of the 13th September, concerning the discussion by the Allied High Commissioners of questions connected with Capitulations, I have the honour to forward herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a telegram on this subject addressed by the French High Commissioner to his Government, which has been handed to me by his Excellency.

I have, &c.
(For High Commissioner),
RICHARD WEBB.

Enclosure in No. 55.

French High Commissioner to French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 10 septembre 1919.

LES Hauts-Commissaires alliés en examinant au point de vue des Capitulations le statut actuel des Alliés autres que les Français, Anglais et Italiens, ont dû constater la situation inférieure dans laquelle se trouvent les Serbes et les Monténégrins. Ceux-ci, qui ne bénéficiaient pas avant la guerre du régime capitulaire, se trouvent actuellement en raison du rétablissement du *statu quo ante*, établi par nous, entièrement soumis à la justice ottomane, tandis que les jugements que rendent les tribunaux locaux contre les Roumains et les Hellènes ne peuvent être exécutés.

Bien que cette situation soit régulière au point de vue du droit, elle n'en constitue pas moins au point de vue politique une injustice regrettable à l'égard des Serbes et des Monténégrins dont il est choquant de voir les ressortissants justifiées des tribunaux d'un État belligérant.

Nous nous réservons, mes collègues et moi, d'exposer par lettre détaillée la question du régime qui devra être appliqué après la guerre tant aux Serbes, Monténégrins et Yougo-Slaves qu'aux Tchéco-Slovaques et aux Polonais. Mais, dès maintenant, nous avons estimé qu'il était urgent de saisir nos Gouvernements de cette question du statut des Serbes et des Monténégrins pendant la durée de l'armistice. Dans ces conditions, nous avons été amenés à nous demander s'il n'y aurait pas lieu jusqu'à la paix d'empêcher l'exécution des jugements rendus par les tribunaux ottomans contre ces ressortissants de deux pays alliés.

[137208/ME 58]

No. 56.

Mr. Wardrop to Earl Curzon.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 49.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tiflis, October 2, 1919.

FOLLOWING are notes of conversation with M. Ussubbekof, Prime Minister of Azerbaijan, on the 28th September:—

1. M. Ussubbekof is willing to submit to neutral (British, American or other) arbitration of all questions concerning Armenia.

2. Quite recently Armenians have destroyed sixty Mussulman villages in districts of Novo Bayazid, Alexandropol, Erivan.

3. Colonel Haskell has made his intervention in Daghestan deadlock dependent on acceptance of American proposals concerning Shahrur, Zangezur, &c., and these proposals differ essentially from those agreed to and put into writing, and have twice been modified under Armenian influence.

4. Azerbaijan is most anxious to come to arrangement with General Denikin, and Ussubbekof went to Tiflis to persuade Georgians, but Denikin is not so well disposed to latter as to Azerbaijan, where (for mixed motives) he allows Russian officers to serve in army. It makes matters difficult that Denikin has no properly accredited agents in Transcaucasia.

5. Denikinist and Bolshevik rule are equally repugnant to Azerbaijan, and their administration is almost equally bad. Azerbaijan wants to live and develop her people and resources. Full particulars of fight not yet received; last man falls rather than endure again old ex-tyranny. At present Transcaucasia is like tail of Russian dog, and whenever things happen in Russia—successes or reverses of Denikin, Kolchak and Trotsky, the wretched tail is wagged. Azerbaijan only wants peace, and has no wish to embark on pan-Islamic-pan-Turk policies.

6. All Transcaucasia looks above all to Great Britain for such moral and material assistance as may be possible in creation of an independent life, and is willing to do all she can to merit confidence and favour of His Majesty's Government.

7. Italians, who came here on a mission, made a very bad impression by their greed for concessions and commercial advantages. (There is a rumour that they have secured contract to construct railway from Aliat, near Baku, to Djulfa.)

8. As a proof of liberal principle of his Government, M. Ussubbekof told me Armenians and Russians were not only represented in Parliament but in Cabinet itself, though Armenia, for instance, with a much larger Christian population, gave no power. In army are Russian and Georgian officers. Anyone who will serve country faithfully is welcomed. There is no fanaticism, and Mussulman religion has ceased to be a factor in politics.

9. I may add I have formed a high opinion of M. Ussubbekof's sincerity and of his ability to control policy of his country. Relations I have established with him are promising for the future.

[137269]

No. 57.

Mr. Wardrop to Earl Curzon.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 50.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tiflis, October 2, 1919.

DURING my conversation with M. Jasarof at Baku, Azerbaijan Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the 29th September, he told me Azerbaijan Government was being vigorously attacked for not doing something to help Daghestan, but Mahomedans' appeal from that region for help had been sternly refused.

Ittihad Party, which has been one of progressive international parties, and is really affiliated to Turkish Committee of Union and Progress, is trying to rouse public opinion.

2. Bolsheviks are turning most of their attention to Central Asia, and, if they are driven out of Moscow, will make Tashkend their headquarters.

3. Tchitcherine has as his assistant a Baku doctor, Narimanof, who wrote from Astrakhan to Azerbaijan Government urging them to join Persian and Indian efforts in a great movement against England. Dr. Narimanof pointed out there was no desire on the part of Bolsheviks to impose on Mussulman countries Soviet form of government; only necessity was an anti-British policy.

4. To this I may add that Prime Minister, when I was at his house, showed me a letter in Russian and Turkish just sent to him by Tashkend Soviet exactly to same effect as Dr. Narimanof's letter. Tashkend message was carried in the double bottom of a teapot by an Eriwan Tartar, who was forced to do this in return for permission to leave Tashkend.

5. M. Jasarof seems very anxious to attract British experts of all kinds to help him by organising country. My own opinion is that, if we could spare good men, it might be well to gratify this wish; such experts would only be responsible to head of State for advice on such matters as finance, railways, education, and any use of word "control" would be inexpedient. I may mention that our acting vice-consul, Mr. Hewelcke, who is manager of Russian State Bank at Baku, was offered 1,000,000 roubles down and a very large salary to enter service of Government, and a similar offer was made to Major Anderson as a railway expert.

No. 58.

Earl Curzon to Mr. Wardrop (Tiflis).

(No. 29.)
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 4, 1919.

PROPOSED recognition of Transcaucasian Republics.

Your telegram No. 20 of 19th September.

The exact measure of recognition that could properly or safely be accorded to the Transcaucasian republics pending the final settlement of their status by the Peace Conference or the League of Nations is exceedingly difficult to determine, and your proposal that provisional recognition of *de facto* Governments should be accompanied by an assurance that acts of republics will not be disavowed would be tantamount to a *de jure* recognition that would prejudice that settlement, whenever or in whatever form it is ultimately arrived at.

Following are some of the further difficulties with which I am faced:—

1. Your arguments for recognition appear to apply to Georgia alone, while your conclusion is apparently for the recognition of all the republics. Am I to understand that, while recognition of Georgia is in itself alone desirable, recognition of Armenia and Azerbaijan must necessarily follow from it and synchronise with it? And what is then to be done with Daghestan?

2. I am quite in the dark as to what recognition will involve. It is easy to act independently if action is negative, as in the case of the Baltic States, but more difficult and perilous if we are to undertake obligations alone.

3. The internecine struggles of the republics themselves and the fact that their respective frontiers have not been even approximately settled, suggest that recognition might only be the incentive to increased disorders. If the Caucasus States would again form a federation or act together, or conjointly appeal to us or to the Allied Powers to act, it might be easier to deal with the case.

4. The problem of the relations of the republics to Denikin overshadows all the rest. I am constantly assured that Georgia and Azerbaijan are actively supporting the enemies of Denikin beyond their own frontiers, *e.g.*, in Daghestan, and that although they may not have sympathy politically with the Bolsheviks, they are working hand-in-glove with them for Denikin's overthrow. Colour is of course lent to this by the agreement recently concluded between the two republics. Doubt is thrown on its purely defensive character, and evidence of active co-operation with Denikin's enemies is being constantly produced. Unless the republics are able to prove that these accusations are without foundation, and to give some concrete evidence of a desire to reach a friendly arrangement with Denikin, I do not see how it is possible in present circumstances to take any action on their behalf. We cannot afford to have Denikin's whole plan of campaign upset by intrigues in his rear, nor can we, in order to defeat German schemes in the Caucasus, risk a wholesale defection to Germany of the greater anti-Bolshevik Russia which Denikin represents.

We have recently addressed a message to the Baltic States pointing out that we have already recognised them as autonomous States and have dealt with them as such. We have told them that the question of *de jure* recognition of their independence is one which the Peace Conference, or the League of Nations sitting as sequel to the Peace Conference, is alone competent to decide, and have added that in any such decision His Majesty's Government may be relied upon to exert such influence as they may possess to secure the satisfaction of their legitimate aspirations so far as may be consistent with a final and peaceful settlement in North-East Europe.

Our Baltic States are acting together, and may even decide, in co-operation, to come to some arrangement with the Russian Soviet Government. In Caucasasia it is not easy at present to discover any similar community either of interest or action.

I shall be glad of your views on all these aspects of the case.

[138231/ME 58]

No. 59.

Mr. Wardrop to Earl Curzon.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 61.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tiflis, October 5, 1919.

FOLLOWING is repetition of my telegram No. 52:—

At Baku on 30th September, at the request of Government of Azerbaijan, I received deputation of four natives of Daghestan, consisting of following:—

Ahmed Tsalikof, Ali Khan Kantemir, Ibrahim Bey Haidarof (recently at Peace Conference in Paris), Babadur Mallachi Khan.

All these belong to educated class, of whom, since fall of "Mountaineers' Republic," hardly any remain in Daghestan, the country being thus abandoned to Moslem religious leaders.

They gave me a clear account of events which led up to the present lamentable state of affairs, and, though it is possible, and even probable, foreign agents have worked among the people, I have no reason to doubt the statement of my visitors that attempt of General Denikin's subordinates to force male population into ranks of Volunteer Army has been chief factor in provoking present universal rising.

Another contributory factor is "colonisation" under old régime of their countrymen by Cossacks, who have not conducted themselves in such a way as to conciliate natives.

I think it right to mention that from British sources I learn some members of the deputation are of doubtful character, though I cannot discover what particular charges are made against them, and person especially censured (Kantemir) struck me as a man of good appearance, and all four were apparently fine types of mountaineers.

At my request they drew up and handed to me the following brief summary of their speeches, complete:—

"Rising in Daghestan and in Chechnia, which has spread over whole of territory of mountaineer people of the Caucasus, is a clear sign of the intolerable nature of political régime established in that territory by the authorities of Volunteer Army and of their complete inability to give peace and order to country. In practice, entire policy of Volunteer Army in the highlands has been despotic contempt of rights of the people and its bondage. Driven by despair, mountaineers, with only daggers in their hands, are fighting with well-equipped detachments of Denikin. Instigated by feelings of revenge and hatred, Volunteer Army is destroying mountain settlements of the people of Daghestan.

"City of Derbent, with its venerable relics, is being bombarded from the sea with incendiary projectiles, which do indescribable harm to peaceful population. Country is threatened with complete ruin in floods of blood and fire. Inhabitants will fight until their strength is exhausted.

"We think this struggle threatens the peace and prosperity of whole of the Caucasus and demands an immediate settlement. There is only one way to achieve this, *viz.*, evacuation of territory by Volunteer Army. We, the undersigned representatives of associated tribesmen of mountaineer peoples of the Caucasus, appeal to you, as chief British Commissioner in Transcaucasus, to take measures in that sense to create peace and order. We are of opinion that temporary demarcation line could be fixed along lower and middle course of the River Terek and Terek Malk until question of frontiers of other republics shall be definitely fixed at Peace Conference."

(Signed by four mentioned above.)

[145582/ME 44 A]

No. 60.

Political Resident, Aden, to Earl Curzon.—(Received October 25.)

(No. C. 8.)

Sir,

Aden, October 9, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, three copies of the seventh Aden news letter, dated the 9th October, 1919, addressed to his Excellency the High Commissioner, Cairo.

I have, &c.

W. DELAMAIN, Major-General.

Enclosure in No. 60.

Seventh Aden News Letter.

Political Resident, Aden, to High Commissioner, Cairo.

(Secret.)

Dear Sir,

Aden, October 9, 1919.

I BEG to submit a brief report on the political situation in the Yemen in continuation of the sixth news letter of the 4th September, 1919.

I.—THE IMAM.

(a.) The Tehama.

Yussuf Hassan, the ex-Kaimakam of Zabid, who has been a refugee for the past two months in Marawa, arrived at Bajil on the night of the 13th September, 1919. It is believed that he has been appointed Acting Governor by the ex-Vali. According to the Political Officer, Hodeida's, agent at Bajil the situation there on the 13th September was critical, and fighting imminent between the Quhra and the Zeidis.

2. Four hundred and thirty Zeidi troops stationed at Zabid were relieved by 180 men despatched from Sana. The relieved garrison left for Sana via Wasab. The total strength of the imamic garrison in Zabid is reported to be 870; there are in addition 230 men in the Mu'asala districts and 100 at Khokha.

3. Fighting was reported to have taken place on the 14th August between the Arabs of Hais and Zeidis under Ibn-el-Wazir, near the village of El-Qalama, in which the latter lost one man killed and had two others wounded. The Zeidi troops were encamped in the village of El-Fish in the Wadi Nakla, but were unable to enter Hais owing to the strong resistance offered by the inhabitants.

According to later reports the contending parties have come to terms through the intervention of Syyed Mehdi, Hassan Wasil and Sheikh Abdulla Mohsin Dobila of Khokha. Both sides have agreed to waive claims for compensation for their killed. The people of Hais have agreed to the payment of an indemnity of 4,000 dollars to the imam. On the 26th August 80 Zeidi soldiers and 5 gendarmes were sent from Zabid to Hais for the purpose of collecting tithes. Ibn-el-Wazir entered Hais on the 28th August with 500 men and one gun, and later left for Zabid with 250 Zeidis, taking with him 8 hostages from J. Ras, 4 from Hais and 2 from Khokha.

4. Fighting is also reported between the two Khokha sheikhs Mahomed Ali Othman and Abdulla Mohsin Dobila. The latter is assisted by Zeidi soldiers.

A later report states that Sheikh Ali Othman has been imprisoned at Hais by the imam's lieutenant, Ibn-el-Wazir, but this is unconfirmed.

5. Abdulla Mubarak, a notable of Zabid, and his companions, who have already undergone six months' imprisonment in Sana, have now been transferred to the prison in Zabid.

"Jacob Mission."

6. Mahomed Tannan, known to the Political Officer, Hodeida, for the past sixteen years, arrived at Hodeida on the 10th September from Bajil with *kat*. According to him the Quhra sheikhs were at logger-heads on the question of the release of the mission. Sheikh Mahomed Zaid of the Mujarida section was expected at Bajil on the 10th September.

7. Another informant, who arrived at Hodeida from Bajil on the 11th September, informed the Political Officer that on the 8th idem the five Quhra chiefs, viz., Abu Hadi, Yahya Ali Muzairiya, Ismail Bhagawi, Mahomed Zaid and Ahmed Khuzam, helped themselves to 100 dollars each and Syyed Abdul Kadir of Marawa to 140 dollars from the mission treasure. The informant said that the general opinion in Bajil was that Colonel Jacob and his party would be released in a few days.

8. Mahomed Hassan, formerly chief of the customs guard at Hodeida, who arrived at Hodeida on the 13th September with letters from Colonel Jacob, reported that all the members of the mission were well and that they were safe under the protection of Sheikh Abu Hadi and Syyed Abdul Kadir. He confirmed the statement that the chiefs were at logger-heads with one another, and had not made up their minds as to what demands they should formulate for the release of the mission. He stated that all except Abu Hadi were in favour of robbing the mission of their funds and animals.

He stated that all the mission's trouble with the Quhra was attributable to the duplicity of Sheikh Ismail Bhagawi.

9. Kadi Abdulla-el-Arashi, who was the imam's envoy in Aden in 1917-18, Sheikh Abdulla Bishar and Jamil Bey, nephew of the ex-Vali, arrived at Bajil from Menakha on the 12th September to discuss the situation re the mission with the Quhra chiefs. They had one meeting but with no apparent result, further discussion having been postponed till Mahmud Nedim's arrival. They were not permitted to visit the mission.

Jamil Bey represents the ex-Vali, but his real object in coming down is reported by the Political Officer, Hodeida, to be to get Mahmud Nedim's ill-gotten gains out of the country.

An informant who arrived at Hodeida from Bajil on the 20th September, reported that the ex-Vali had arrived at Bajil on the 19th September from Menakha with an escort of forty-one gendarmes (some Zeidis, but the greater part from the Beni Makatal) and five sowars under Captain Mahomed Hafiz, formerly in the Turkish service.

The imam threatened to despatch a strong force against the Quhra if they persisted in holding up the mission. The Quhra replied that they were prepared to fight him, and that on no account would they liberate the mission.

On the 14th September an informant reported that there was no actual concentration of imamic troops at Menakha, but that men from all centres in the mountains had been called up for service in the Tehama. Another report states that the imam is collecting forces at Sana.

On the 15th September the Hodeida Political Officer's agent at Bajil reported that he had inferred from a conversation with one of the Quhra sheikhs, Ahmed Khuzam, that the Quhra would formulate the following demands:—

- (1.) A guarantee that the Quhra tribe would remain independent and not brought under the domination of the imam.
- (2.) The payment of compensation by us for damage done to the town of Hodeida by bombardment in 1917 and of indemnities for loss of life, &c.
- (3.) The raising of the blockade.

The general opinion in Bajil on the 17th September was, according to an informant, that the Quhra sheikhs were coming round, and were prepared to release the mission and permit it to return to the coast if they received an assurance that the imam would not take reprisals against them, and that they did not intend to demand a ransom or to impose any other conditions.

An informant of the Political Officer, Hodeida, reports that on the night of the 18th September Kadi Abdulla-el-Arashi, the Imam's representative, met Sheikh Abu Hadi, Yahya Ali Muzairiya and Ismail Bhagawi in the house of Syyed Abdul Kadir, who, however, was not present. During the conversation the Kadi Abdul-el-Arashi informed the sheikhs present that if they released the mission the imam would surely annihilate the Quhra. The Kadi reminded them of the imam's action in *re* the inhabitants of Zabid and J. Bura'a. The sheikhs replied that they were determined to hold the mission up till proper assurances had been obtained from the imam and from the British Government to the effect that the former would take no reprisals against them for their recent conduct.

10. Ahmed Khuzam, one of the five Quhra sheikhs, is reported to have recently written through the Amil of Zaidiyah to the Idrisi informing him of the detention of Colonel Jacob and his party, and asking him to send assistance in arms and men in case the imam or anyone else despatched an expedition against the Quhra. The reason for the detention given by Ahmed Khuzam was that the mission was not an international one, as they were given to understand by the imam some time ago.

11. News received under date 25th September, 1919, states that Sheikh Ismail Bhagawi has advised all the Quhra sheikhs not to pay any attention to the counsel of the ex-Vali. He added that if the British Mission was released, they would be attacked by the British as well as the imam forces.

Syyed Abdul Kadir has also advised the Quhra sheikhs to keep the mission under strict surveillance, as he suspects that the members will attempt to flee from Bajil at night through the help of Sheikh Abu Hadi. The chief impediments at Bajil to the release of the mission are believed to be this Syyed, Sheikh Ismail Bhagawi, Yusuf Hassan and Syyed Ali Bari of Marawa.

Mr. Richardson, Political Officer, Hodeida, sent his interpreter, Hassan Kanjooni, to Bajil, where he was imprisoned by the Quhra. He reports that the Quhra people are frightened, as they think that Colonel Jacob has asked for troops. The sheikhs too

have now changed their attitude and are not so hostile as before, and the various akils are now dispersing. They now understand that Colonel Jacob is not afraid of them. According to Hassan Kanjooni, Syed Abdul Kadir is working on behalf of the mission. We have also heard this from other sources, but have equally good news to the contrary effect. It would appear, therefore, that Syed Abdul Kadir is playing a double game.

12. Hassan Kanjooni was released through the intervention of Sheikh Ismail Bhagawi, and is now living with Sheikh Abu Hadi. Hassan Kanjooni, referring to his imprisonment, writes on the 29th September as follows:—

"1. Four accusations were made against me, but none was proved. I have given satisfactory answers to all the accusations."

"2. The Quhra sheikhs at first demanded 1,000 dollars for my release. They at last decreased it to 200 dollars. I am not willing to pay them anything, but as a measure of precaution it is advisable to remit the last-mentioned amount to me."

13. It is reported that the ex-Vali has expressed his approval to the Quhra sheikhs as to the treatment accorded by them to the mission. He told them that the imam was prepared to surrender everything to the British had the mission been allowed to proceed to Sana. In an interview which the Political Officer, Hodeida's informant had with Mahmud Nedim, the latter said he hoped that the mission would be released soon.

14. The Quhra sheikhs have deputed Sheikh Khuzam to meet Syed Mustafa-el-Idrisi at Zaidiyya, where the latter is expected. The sheikhs expect Syed Mustafa will agree with their views, failing which they will declare war against the Idrisi, but I consider this report very incredible.

15. The Quhra sheikhs are now reported to be searching all comers from Hodeida to Bajil.

16. Negotiations for the release of the mission have made no progress, and I think the time has now come for a change of tone towards the Quhra. I have sent Major Meek to Hodeida to replace Mr Richardson, who is proceeding on leave, and await his report on the situation before putting forward any definite proposals.

It is difficult to gauge the attitude of the ex-Vali Mahmud Nadim. He has gone to Bajil ostensibly as representative of the imam, but appears rather to be playing for his own hand, for whereas he informs Colonel Jacob that he fears the ambitious aims of the imam, he also informs the Quhra that he approves of their action in holding up the mission, as, had they been able to reach the imam, the latter would have conceded all they ask.

I have reported the progress of negotiations by wire from time to time, and it appears to me from such scanty information as we have received that the aim of the ex-Vali is to get Turkish troops back to the Yemen to support him as first Mussulman Governor of the Tehama.

Hodeida.

17. The Political Officer, Hodeida, reports the following casualties among the raiders on the 30th August and 2nd September, 1919:—

On the 30th August, 1919:—

Mafira: 3 men killed; 7 men wounded.

Marawa: 4 men killed; 6 men wounded.

On the 2nd September, 1919:—

Marawa: 7 men killed or died from wounds; 15 men wounded.

Filail clan under Akil-el-Banna: 3 men killed and 6 died from wounds; 12 or 13 wounded.

Sukhmia (Beit-Hareesa) Rabasa: 2 men killed; 3 wounded.

Manafira: 4 men killed; 6 men wounded.

These figures do not include the dead left behind on the field.

The village of Beit-el-Hareesa is reported to have been completely evacuated, Ahmed Hareesa and his gang of robbers having moved further east into the interior with their families and belongings.

18. The two Marawa Syeds, Ali Bari and Mahomed-bin-Ahmed El-Katib, were busy in inciting the Quhra and Aboos to join in a further attack on Hodeida, assuring

them that there is considerable loot yet to be had in that town. The Quhra have declined the overtures. Syed Mahomed El-Katib went to Bajil to endeavour to enlist the assistance of the Quhra. The other syed has gone to the Aboos country to incite the Aboos tribesmen. The syeds are not considered likely to succeed in organising another attack, as the news of big reinforcements having reached Hodeida has spread throughout the Tehama.

19. The inhabitants of Zaidiyya have expressed their regret for the misguided action of the Arabs who recently made a predatory attack on Hodeida.

Lower Yemen.

20. It is said that the imam's representative at Taiz intimated Sheikh Abdul Wahab Noman of Hujaria, who was at Taiz, that he intended to send a party of 300-400 Zeidis to collect tithes there. The latter replied that he would see to the collection himself, but that on no account would he admit Zeidis into his country. As, however, the former insisted on sending Zeidis, Abdul Wahab summoned all his sheikhs to Taiz in order to consult their wishes in the matter. Later reports show that on the sixth day of the "Bakri Id" Zeidi soldiers under the command of Ali bin Al Wazir proceeded to Saber (near Taiz) at night and assailed the hill. He captured the town of Taiz and also one-third of Jabel Saber, a very strong hill overlooking the town. On taking Taiz he decapitated six of the Saafai. The people of Taiz accuse Sayed Ahmed Pasha of Taiz and one Bin Ahmed Abdu of being traitors, who in their anxiety to please the imam brought the Zeidis to Saber. Sheikh Mahomed Nasir is said to have supplied this force with 6,000 kadabs of grain. The imam again demanded the surrender of the Turkish guns from Mahomed Nasir and he delivered one gun and one machine-gun, but the imam declined to be contented with this, and the latest report states that an imamic garrison of sixty men has entered Mawia, where they are collecting the tithes, and have demanded from Sheikh Mahomed Nasir a full and true account of all the customs collections at the Mawia custom-house since the departure of the Turks.

II.—IDRISI.

21. The Political Officer, Hodeida, has received information to the effect that the King of the Hedjaz sent a case of treasure to Sheikh Ibn A'yid, chief of B. Mogheid in Asir, asking him to renounce his allegiance to the Idrisi and to exercise his influence in the country in his (King Hussein's) interests. Ibn A'yid reported the matter to the Idrisi and asked for assistance in arms and men to protect himself in case of aggression. The Idrisi has sent a quantity of arms and a force including 100 Turks under Major [?] Effendi (late of the Turkish army) to Ibn A'yid and has instructed him to retain the treasure.

22. The Idrisi is reported to have established octroi posts at Manaira and Zaidiyya and to be levying dues on all merchandise coming from territory other than his own. This action is said to have caused dissatisfaction amongst the local population.

III.—MAHOMED NASIR MUKBIL.

23. From reports received from various sources it appears that Kaid Saleh, nephew of Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil, has started intrigues with the imam. He is said to have gone to the imam and offered to collect tithes for him in all Shafai districts, including certain places in our protectorate. The imam agreed on condition that Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil delivered to him all the guns and ammunition left with the latter by the Turks. The imam added that if these guns and ammunition were given up by Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil he (imam) would not interfere with him beyond appointing a cad and a custom-house officer in Mawia, under the orders of Kaid Saleh. Kaid Saleh is said to have been appointed by the imam temporary Governor of the Kada of Kamaira, which will carry with it the payment to the imam monthly of a certain sum of money which has not yet been fixed. Kaid Saleh offered the imam 1,300 dollars per mensem, but the imam has not agreed to it. Other details re Mahomed Nasir have been given under paragraph 20.

IV.—ADEN PROTECTORATE.

24. As already reported, the imam has established a custom-house at Sana within our protectorate and is levying transit dues on caravans proceeding to and from Kataba, &c. The exact date of the occupation of Sana is not known.

Kayed Saleh, nephew of Mahomed Nasir Mukbil, Kayem Makam of the Kama'ira district, is said to have undertaken the responsibility of collecting the tithes, &c., due to the imam from Shoaib and Amiri villages such as Shairi, Jihaf, Dala, &c., as also from places in the Kama'ira district which is beyond the British protectorate, but has not hitherto attempted to carry his agreement into effect.

Reports from the *cadi* of Dala says that the officer at Al Nadira has been instructed to collect a large number of men to proceed against Shoa'ib, Jihaf and Dala and other places in our protectorate, but these reports have not been confirmed.

The Kotaibis have been interrupting the trade routes between Dala and Aden, in consequence of which caravans have been compelled to use the Mashwara route running through the Azraki (Amiri) country.

The Haushabi sultan has sent me letters saying that the imam intends to make an incursion into his country, &c., through Mawia.

The Mansuris, a sub-tribe of Subehi, have for a considerable time interrupted the trade routes and interfered with travellers, but they have now apparently submitted to the Abdali sultan who is responsible for the Subehi country.

Sheikh Mosi'd Motahar, custodian of the boundary pillars at Sahm Al Ardaf, died on the 11th September, 1919, and his brother, Saeed Motahar, has succeeded him.

The tribes in the Aden protectorate are very uneasy as to the imam's aims. Colonel Jacob was to have told the imam that we expected him to respect our boundary, but his detention at Bajil has naturally upset this programme. I have written to Colonel Jacob to enquire whether he considers it politic at this juncture for me to address the imam direct on the subject.

Yours, &c.
W. DELAMAIN.

[142972/ME 44]

No. 61.

Rear-Admiral Webb to Earl Curzon.—(Received October 18.)

(No. 1943.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Constantinople, October 10, 1919.

MY telegram No. 1813 of 13th September.

Italian High Commissioner has received telegram from his Government that right of Serbs to Capitulations can only be decided by Peace Treaty.

This is obvious, but point which calls for our attention at the moment is this: quite apart from any question of Capitulations, is it permissible that citizens of Allied States such as Serbia [group undecypherable], Slavonia or of such States as Czechoslovakia or Poland should be subject to decisions of Turkish, i.e., enemy Courts?

[138231/ME 58]

No. 62.

Earl Curzon to Mr. Wardrop (Tiflis).

(No. 39.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 11, 1919.

RECEPTION of Daghestani deputation.

Your telegram No. 61 of 5th October.

Azerbaijan Government should not have asked you to receive Daghestani deputation, and it would have been better had you not done so. Any action is to be deprecated which might encourage hopes of British intervention in that region.

[141222/ME 58]

No. 63.

Mr. Wardrop to Earl Curzon.—(Received October 14.)

(No. 70.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tiflis, October 12, 1919.

FOLLOWING is substance of long proclamation widely circulated through Transcaucasia, signed by Chicherin and Dr. Nariman Narimanof, head of Near East Mussulman Section of Moscow Commissary for Foreign Affairs (see my telegram No. 50, 2nd October).

"To workmen and peasants of Georgia, Daghestan and Azerbaijan. Denikin is coming to restore authority [autocracy] and put you again under Russian yoke.

"But how can Denikin do this when your lands are declared to be under British protectorate? England is trying to crush Russian revolution, and Denikin is attacking you with knowledge of England, which, on account of its internal condition, is obliged to abandon Caucasus.

"But on leaving Caucasus England wishes to hand you over to Tsar's general, and prevent you from joining your Russian brothers who are about to triumph in their struggle against capitalism.

"Your Government, fearing dictature of proletariat, accepted first German then English protectorate, and now England is handing you over to Denikin.

"But why do your governing classes declare war on Denikin? Because they know they will be contested by Governors-General and old Tsarist régime will be restored.

"But it is even now possible that at England's dictation your rulers may say that if Denikin does not come, Soviet Russia will come and break up your peaceful life and bourgeois régime, and submit to Denikin to save themselves from Bolsheviks.

"All this is possible, and both England and your governing classes, who have carried on policy of duplicity and sold your rights, are capable of doing this.

"We therefore declare before whole world that Soviet Government has never gone out to seize other peoples' land or to establish Soviet power on foreign territory by force of arms. It has only defended itself.

"Soviet Russia has no intention of marching against your republics to establish its power. It upholds principle of self-determination even for backward races, and has given autonomy to Bashkirs and Kirghizes.

"And if you, Mussulmans and Georgians, are satisfied with form of Government of your republics then live at peace, self-determine yourselves and establish neighbourly relations with us.

"Soviet Russia expresses firm hope that workmen and peasants of Daghestan, Azabaijan and Georgia will not let their liberty be trampled under foot by the Tsarist General, the English hangman, Denikin."

It is interesting that Chicherin treats Transcaucasian Governments as decidedly anti-Bolshevik, and yet asks for their collaboration and admits possibility of their being after all truly representative.

[143094/ME 44]

No. 64.

Rear-Admiral Webb to Earl Curzon.—(Received October 20.)

(No. 1955)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Constantinople, October 13, 1919.

ITALIANS have made preparations which are now complete for re-establishing their Consular Court. French are taking similar measures. They suggest it would be desirable that we should do the same, so that all might open simultaneously.

They point out that even when proposed Provisional Court comes into being, that will only provide for cases between subjects of three Allies and Ottomans and not for cases between Allies of different nationalities.

This fresh complication, which seems to me very regrettable, is, however, unavoidable in view of extraordinary duration of armistice.

[143080/ME 58]

No. 65.

Mr. Wardrop to Earl Curzon.—(Received October 19.)

(No. 78. Secret.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Tiflis, October 14, 1919.

AT a meeting of Georgian Cabinet, lasting from 8 P.M. 13th October till the early hours of 14th October, it was decided by eight votes to one that Great Britain should be requested to accept mandate. Solitary opponent favoured American mandate.

[146650/ME 47]

No. 66.

Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck to Earl Curzon.—(Received October 29.)

(No. 1940.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, October 20, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a letter, dated the 25th September, which I have received from the delegate of the Czecho-Slovakian Republic, concerning the application of Capitulations to Czecho-Slovak subjects, and of a joint note, dated the 16th October, addressed to the delegate in reply by the three Allied High Commissioners.

I have, &c.

J. M. DE ROBECK,
High Commissioner.

Enclosure 1 in No. 66.

Czecho-Slovakian Delegate to British High Commissioner, Constantinople.

Excellence,

Constantinople, le 25 septembre 1919.

LE soussigné, délégué par intérim du Gouvernement de la République tchéco-slovaque, a l'honneur de vous exposer ce qui suit :

Les autorités turques, prétendant que la Turquie n'aurait pas encore reconnu la République tchéco-slovaque, se livrent journellement aux pires exactions envers les sujets tchéco-slovaques, de sorte que j'ai presque chaque jour à recourir à l'intervention de la police interalliée pour cause de délogements, saisies, appositions des scellés arbitraires, &c.

Il ne peut nullement être question de reconnaissance de la République tchéco-slovaque alliée de l'Entente, pour les raisons suivantes :

1. Parce que la République tchéco-slovaque se trouve en sa qualité d'alliée comme Puissance occupatrice à Constantinople représentée par les Hauts-Commissaires des grandes Puissances et le commandement des armées alliées auprès desquels le représentant du Gouvernement de la République tchéco-slovaque a été accrédité. Il résulte de ce fait seul que les sujets tchéco-slovaques jouissent des mêmes droits que les autres sujets ententistes, donc les autorités turques ne peuvent jusqu'à la conclusion de la paix ni juger nos sujets ni prélever les impôts, &c.

2. En signant la paix, la Turquie sera obligée de reconnaître la République tchéco-slovaque, et c'est à cette occasion que la question des capitulations sera réglée.

Le soussigné, appuyé sur les raisons ci-devant invoquées, a l'honneur de prier les représentants des grandes Puissances de vouloir, par une démarche collective auprès du Gouvernement ottoman, faire respecter les droits de la République tchéco-slovaque.

J'aime à croire, Excellence, qu'une suite favorable sera donnée à ma demande et je vous prie d'agréer, &c.

[Signature illegible.]

Enclosure 2 in No. 66.

*Joint Allied Note to Czecho-Slovakian Delegate.**Constantinople, le 16 octobre 1919.*

LES Hauts-Commissaires de France, de Grande-Bretagne et d'Italie ont reçu la lettre que M. le Délégué spécial du Gouvernement de la République tchéco-slovaque a bien voulu leur adresser, à la date du 25 septembre, pour réclamer en faveur de ses ressortissants l'exemption de la juridiction ottomane et des impôts ottomans.

Ils ont l'honneur de lui faire savoir qu'ils se sont empressés de soumettre cette question à l'appréciation de leurs Gouvernements. Ils ne manqueront pas de lui communiquer la réponse qu'ils en recevront, dès qu'elle leur sera parvenue.

A. DEFRANCE.
RICHARD WEBB.
MAISSA.

[144528/ME 58]

No. 67.

Mr. Wardrop to Earl Curzon.—(Received October 22.)

(No. 81)

(Telegraphic.)

Tiflis, October 20, 1919.

YOUR Lordship's telegram No. 29 of the 4th October arrived here mutilated on the 14th October and was not delivered to me until my return from Armenia this morning.

1. Arguments for recognition of Georgia are stronger juridically, politically and economically than those for other republics, so I laid greater stress on that side of the question, but I am of opinion that Armenia and Azerbaijan should at the same time be recognised and that Daghestan should be placed under British or Allied control with a view to its final independence. This barrier against Russia seems to me an absolute essential for safety of our position in Persia and India.

2. Process would involve risks, but to allow Transcaucasia eventually to fall under hostile influence would be still more perilous to us as an Asiatic Power. Most desirable event for us would be that America should commit herself to some course of action in this part of the world which would make our interests identical.

3. You will have learnt from preceding telegrams that I consider further internecine struggles improbable, and a very small show of force on our part would keep the peace. Republics are already seriously engaged in attempt to fix their frontiers; declared intention of various Governments is in favour of a federation.

4. Fear of Denikin, and I believe it is well founded, is disturbing element, and even qualified recognition would greatly diminish it. If evidence can be produced that republics are really actively co-operating with Denikin's enemies, I shall confront Governments concerned with that evidence. So far I have nothing but rumours like that referred to in your telegram No. 41. Both Georgia and Azerbaijan were trying to come to a *modus vivendi* through General Baratof before he was wounded, and I believe an agreement would be reached without much effort. Only impediment is fear of Denikin, and this fear is even shared by Armenia if I may believe M. Khatissian.

5. I have no confidence that a victorious volunteer army would be less pro-German than Bolsheviks.

6. If some such message as His Majesty's Government have, according to penultimate paragraph of your telegram, addressed to Baltic States were issued and accompanied by a solemn assurance that His Majesty's Government would effectively show their disapproval of any aggressive action on part of Denikin, I believe this would suffice for the present. Denikin would have more ground for objecting to what has been done in case of States in immediate vicinity of Petrograd than he could possibly have in case of distant regions like this.

7. There is a general and growing desire in three republics to work together, and national interest seems to me to be greater here than in Baltic States. There is here such variety of climatic and other conditions that a national economic policy and common fear of aggression would always furnish a guarantee for harmonious action in most fields. In all three republics Governments express their strong desire for abolition of customs barriers, for united currency, for collective control of railways, posts, telegraphs, &c. They have already shown their fitness for self-government and they (with the exception of Baku for a short period when it was in the hands of foreigners) are only part of what was Russia where Bolshevism had not had any success.

8. So long as we have garrisons in Batoum and North Persia mere gendarmerie would be sufficient to preserve order here, and I hardly think that would be necessary.

9. Failing some action such as I venture to suggest, there is a risk that Azerbaijan and Daghestan may incite Turkey to come in and that Mustafa Kemal or someone of the kind may attempt here what von der Goltz tried in the north.

10. I understand General Harbord will probably propose a mandate for whole of Turkey and Transcaucasia together. He maintains that this would involve use of much less military force. Like nearly everybody else he admits that Americans had not necessary training to manage Eastern peoples and suggests that personnel under mandate should be British. I hardly think that such a large group could be worked harmoniously, as in it there would be competing economic interests and possibility of Mussulman predominance and a pan-Islamic movement.

[142972/ME 44]

No. 68.

Earl Curzon to Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck (Constantinople).

(No. 1721.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, November 3, 1919.

YOUR telegram No. 1943 of 10th October: Exemption of Allies from Turkish jurisdiction.

I consider that subjects of Allied belligerent States should not be amenable to Turkish jurisdiction during armistice. You may take steps accordingly in conjunction with your colleagues.

The question of any extension of capitulatory rights to States which did not enjoy them before the war is an entirely separate one, which cannot be settled until conclusion of peace.

Despatch follows.

[157888/ME 53]

No. 69.

Mr. Wardrop to Earl Curzon.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 70.)

My Lord,

Tiflis, November 4, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, in translation, copies of two treaties signed yesterday at Tiflis between Armenia and Georgia—

1. Freeing the transit trade from all customs duties.
2. Providing for the settlement of all disputes by agreement, or, failing this, by compulsory arbitration.

I have expressed to both parties my congratulations on the conclusion of these agreements.

I have, &c.

O. WARDROP.

Enclosure 1 in No. 69.

Agreement between Armenia and Georgia respecting the Freeing from all Customs Duties of the Transit Trade.

(Translation.)

THE Government of the Republic of Armenia, represented by Stepan, son of Gregory Mamikonian, and Sumbat, son of Artem Khachaturian (member of the Parliament of Armenia), of the one part; and the Government of the Republic of Georgia, represented by the Minister of the Interior and of War, Noé, son of Bessarion Ramishvili, and the Vice-President of the Constituent Assembly of the Republic of Georgia, Simon, son of George Mdivani, of the other part, who, having acquainted themselves with their full powers, and finding them in due form and proper shape, have concluded the present treaty concerning the following:—

1. For goods proceeding by the Armenian railways from beyond the bounds of Armenia into Georgia or from Georgia beyond the bounds of Armenia, and also for goods proceeding by the Georgian railways from beyond the bounds of Georgia into Armenia or from Armenia beyond the bounds of Georgia, there is established free transit, i.e., transit without customs duties.

2. This treaty is established for the period of three years, so that on the expiry of one year from the day of the ratification to each of the contracting parties there is granted the right to declare for the revision of the treaty, and in that case the treaty remains in force during six months from the day of the declaration. If during that period the parties do not arrive at an agreement concerning the revision, then the effectivity of the treaty terminates.

3. The ratification of the present treaty must take place within two weeks in the city of Tiflis.

4. The present treaty is drawn up in duplicate.

STEPAN GRIG. MAMIKONIAN.

SUMBAT ART. KHACHATURIAN,

Member of the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia.

N. RAMISHVILI,

Minister of the Interior and of War of the Republic of Georgia.

S. MDIVANI,

*Vice-President of the Constituent Assembly.**Tiflis, November 3, 1919.*

Enclosure 2 in No. 69.

Agreement between Armenia and Georgia as to the future Settlement of Disputes.

(Translation.)

THE Government of the Republic of Armenia, represented by Stepan, son of Gregory Mamikonian, and Sumbat, son of Artem Khachaturian (member of the Parliament of Armenia), of the one part, and the Government of the Republic of Georgia, represented by the Minister of the Interior and of War, Noé, son of Bessarion Ramishvili, and the Vice-President of the Constituent Assembly of the Republic of Georgia, Simon, son of George Mdivani, of the other part, who, having acquainted themselves with their full powers, and finding them in due form and proper shape, have concluded the present treaty concerning the following:—

1. The Contracting States (the Republics of Armenia and Georgia) bind themselves to settle by means of agreement all existing conflicts, and also all which may arise between them, and if such agreement be not attained, then by means of compulsory arbitration.

2. The ratification of the present treaty must take place within two weeks in the city of Tiflis.

3. The present treaty is drawn up in duplicate.

STEPAN G. MAMIKONIAN.

SUMBAT A. KHACHATURIAN,

Member of the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia.

N. RAMISHVILI,

Minister of the Interior and of War of the Republic of Georgia.

S. MDIVANI,

*Vice-President of the Constituent Assembly.**Tiflis, November 3, 1919.*

[136080/ME 44]

No. 70.

Earl Curzon to Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck (Constantinople).

(No. 672.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 7, 1919.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 1737 of the 22nd September and to my telegram No. 1721 of the 3rd instant, relative to the question as to whether the Serbs and Montenegrins and the nationals of other countries which before the war did not enjoy capitulatory rights should, during the Armistice, be made amenable to Turkish jurisdiction, and should ultimately obtain extra-territorial rights in Turkey, I have to inform you that during the discussions in the Treaty Sub-Committee of the Economic Commission in Paris of the provisions which should be inserted in the Treaty of Peace with Turkey as to the future of the Capitulations, the representative of the Serb-Croat-Slovene State intimated that his Government considered that, as part of that State had

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constituted Austrian territory, the nationals of the whole of the new State ought in future to enjoy in Turkey the same extra-territorial rights as Austrian nationals had previously enjoyed. It appears, however, impossible to find any justification in law for this proposal.

On the other hand, Serbia was originally part of Turkey, and because the inhabitants have been freed from Turkish domination there would appear to be no particular reason why they should expect, if they go into the Ottoman dominions, the same privileges as the Porte was content to confer by treaty on the nationals of Powers which it regarded as its equals.

Furthermore, admission of new States such as Poland, and of States such as Montenegro, which have not previously enjoyed these privileges, to the full benefits of the capitulatory régime, may be taken to mean that no legislation could be made universal and effective in Turkey without the concurrence of a much larger number of Powers than before the war. The result would be to make the problem of government in Turkey impossible.

As you will observe from the above considerations, the whole subject is extremely complicated, and indeed constitutes one of the most difficult problems with which the negotiators of the Turkish Treaty will have to deal. It is therefore highly desirable that no action or decision should be taken by yourself and your colleagues at the present time which might add to these complications.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[154464/ME 44]

No. 71.

Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck to Earl Curzon.—(Received November 22.)

(No. 2116.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, November 12, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith for your Lordship's information copy of a communication, dated the 29th October, No. 310/10 from my representative at Smyrna, acquainting me that the French consul-general at Smyrna has been authorised by the French High Commissioner to reopen the French Consular Court.

2. Mr. Morgan is being asked for his views in regard to the reopening of the British Consular Court.

I have, &c.

J. M. DE ROBECK,
High Commissioner.

Enclosure in No. 71.

Mr. Morgan to British High Commissioner, Constantinople.

(No. 310/10.)

Sir,

Smyrna, October 29, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that my French colleague, M. Laporte, who is also French consul-general in this town, and who has just returned from a visit to Constantinople, has been authorised by the French High Commissioner to reopen the French Consular Court to deal with matters which have been in litigation for some time.

I have, &c.

JAMES MORGAN.

[156450/ME 44]

No. 72.

Political Resident, Aden, to Earl Curzon.

(No. C. 9.)

Sir,

Aden, November 13, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, three copies of the eighth Aden news letter, dated the 12th November, 1919, addressed to his Excellency the High Commissioner, Cairo.

I have, &c.

J. M. STEWART, Major-General.

Enclosure in No. 72.

Eighth Aden News Letter.

Political Resident, Aden, to High Commissioner, Cairo.

(Secret.)

Dear Sir Milne Cheetham,

Aden, November 12, 1919.

THE following is a brief report on the political situation in the Yemen since the date of the last letter on the subject, i.e., October 9, 1919:—

THE IMAM.

(a.) *Tihama.*

1. Out of 200 imamic soldiers who arrived at Zabeed on the 18th August, 100 are reported to have been detailed to Khokha under the command of Sheikh Yahya Mohsin Dobilla, referred to in paragraph 3 of the last letter. Two customs inspectors have also been sent to Khokha in order to open customs and collect dues on goods arriving there from Djibouti.

2. In September last the imamic Amil of Jebel Reima, it is said, invited the dignitaries of Beit-el-Fakih and the Zaraniq to send their deputies to him in order to discuss certain important matters of public utility. The latter replied declining the invitation, and stating that they had chosen the Idrisi as their ruler and not the imam.

3. In explanation of the circumstances leading to the supposed imprisonment of Sheikh Ali Othman, referred to in paragraph 4 of the last letter, it is stated that Ali Othman arrived at Hais on the 17th August, and applied to Syeed Mahomed-el-Wazir, the imam's lieutenant at Hais, for help against Sheikh Mahomed Hassan, the well-known leader of the Shafais at Jebel Habashi. Ali Othman's request was not complied with. On the contrary, the imam's commander imprisoned Ali Othman and pressed him for the surrender of all the guns, arms and ammunition of the Turks that were in his possession. The commander has gone to Maoza near Mokha where the guns are said to be lying. The report of Ali Othman's imprisonment is, however, still contradicted. A later report states that four guns have been seized. It will be remembered that the quarrel between Sheikh Mahomed Hassan and Ali Othman started in connection with these very guns. Mahomed Hassan has been trying his very best to take possession of these guns from Ali Othman. In this connection attention is invited to paragraphs 20 and 27 of letters dated the 21st May and 15th August and letter dated the 4th September, 1919.

4. A report states that on the 21st September parties of Massala tribes raided Sooh and plundered a few animals. Sooh is near Zabeed, which has been recently occupied by the imam. On the following day the raiders entered Zabeed and fired on the town, but were silenced by the imam's troops there. Firing is said to be going on daily at night since then.

5. Of the 200 Zeidi soldiers despatched to Bajil under Sheikh Ali Salami some time ago (*vide* paragraph 6 of letter of the 15th August, 1919) only twelve are now left, the rest having escaped to Sana from time to time. The Amil, Ali Salami, is said to be also trying to escape, but finds it difficult to do so, as he is kept under strict surveillance.

6. Two Sheikhs of Zabeed, Abdulla Mubarak and his son Yahya Mubarak, who were being taken to Mokha by the imam's Commander of Wasaab-el-Aali, Syeed Mahomed-el-Wazir, apparently as hostages, are said to have escaped and taken shelter with the Zaraniqs.

7. The following is reported to be the strength of the imam's garrison in the district of Zabeed:—

	Men.
Jabel Ras	40
Hais	60
Khokha	20
Maasala	80
Zabeed	400
	600

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8. "Haya-ala Khair-al-Amal" is used by Zeidis as a call for prayer. The Sunnies have their own form. The imam is reported to have enjoined on the Sunnies the use of the Zeidi form in addition to their own. This is said to have caused universal resentment amongst the Sunnies.

"JACOB" MISSION AND HODAIDAH.

9. A messenger from Bajil informed the Political Officer, Hodaïdah, on the 30th September, 1919, that in Bajil people generally believed that the ex-Vali was at the bottom of the whole mission trouble.

10. A prominent merchant of Beit-el-Fakih is said to have written a letter on behalf of Sheikh Munassar of the Northern Zaraniqs to Sheikh Abu Hadi expressing his approval of the detention of the mission, and suggesting that it (mission) should not be released, and that its property should be plundered and divided amongst the Quhra sheikhs. Sheikh Munassar offers to take charge of the mission in case Sheikh Abu Hadi is not able to detain it much longer.

11. At the same time Syed Izzi Alawi of Beit-el-Fakih has warned Sheikh Ali Humeida, fath r of Abu Hadi, not to play with English diplomacy, which will lead to destruction of their (Quhra) country. The writer suggests that Abu Hadi should use his influence with the Quhra sheikhs to secure the release of the mission.

12. According to latest reports from the Political Officer, Hodaïdah, there has been an admirable change in the feeling among the Zaraniqs and others in favour of the mission.

13. Ahmed Khuzam, the Quhra sheikh, has not received any reply from the Idrisi to his letter referred to in paragraph 10 of the last letter.

14. One of the news agents of the Political Officer, Hodaïdah, writes that the people in Lohiya and Zaidiya are anxiously awaiting the result of the mission question.

15. A certain Kazi Hamood, formerly Kazi of Sana under the imam, arrived at Zaidiya from Bajil about the middle of September and proceeded to Jizan on a visit to the Idrisi. He stated that he was a deputy from Syed Abdul Kadir, of Marawa, and was in possession of some papers relating to the examination of the mission at Bajil.

16. From the reports received by the Political Officer, Hodaïdah, during September, it appeared that the two Marawa Syeds, Ali Bari and Mahomed Ibn Ahmed-el-Khatib, had been persistent in their efforts to incite the Aboos and Quhra people, but without much success. Ahmed Harisa and Akil Saeed Banna, of the Kalikila sub-section of the Aboos tribe, joined Ali Bari, but the tribesmen of the latter are said to have refused to join as they were afraid of our gun-fire. Ahmed Harisa was in correspondence with the Katabia and Rabasa tribes, and instigated them to make a sudden attack on Mandah near Hodaïdah, but his efforts failed. Ibrahim Mokhawwi, of Beit-el-Fakih, was reported to be trying to get Sheikh Munassar of the northern Zaraniq to join the Aboos in a raid on Hodaïdah, but the sensible people of the place were against it. The party of Sheikh Reimi Ali, of Mohabia, flatly refused to join him.

17. Major Meek took charge as Political Officer, Hodaïdah, on the 6th October. He found that many people were still in ignorance of the trade restrictions having been removed, and promptly took measures to ensure that this knowledge should come to the notice of all. He got into touch with the neighbouring sayeds, mansabs, and sheikhs, and by tactful dealing and expenditure of a certain amount of money has gradually won them over to his side, and now reports that the situation at Hodaïdah has so far improved that the Quhra may be considered as isolated from outside support. He has also contrived that the Quhra themselves should no longer be solid in their determination to hold the mission until their demands, which included the recall of Turkish troops, should be granted. The chief obstacle to the early release of the mission appears to be Mahmud Nadhim Pasha, the ex-Wali, who has been appointed the mouthpiece of the Quhra sheikhs. Everything appears to point to the Wali, with or without the knowledge of the imam is uncertain, having engineered the detention of Colonel Jacob's Mission at Hodaïdah. A letter, which is interesting as showing the altered feeling at Hodaïdah since the arrival of Major Meek, was written by a merchant named Morgan Hamumi to a man in Aden, of which the following is an extract:—

"Since the day of the arrival of the new Political Officer we are feeling secure and pleased. He is good with all the people generally. Had this person come from the

beginning, all the people of Yemen would have been at his disposal on account of his good disposition, conduct and policy. This is for your information so that you may be appeased."

17A. A certain amount of difficulty has been experienced regarding sending supplies to Hodaïdah. The blockade has been removed, but we have still, owing to the shortage of certain necessary articles here, got a Controller of Civil Supplies in Aden. The Controller has been giving export permits for Hodaïdah very freely, but the goods have not been arriving there. It appears that merchants regard trade with Hodaïdah as very speculative, as we have not hitherto been in a position to guarantee protection, and they have not been availing themselves of their permits. I have arranged with Messrs. Cowasjee, Dinshaw and Brothers for a regular monthly service of steamers to Hodaïdah. Major Meek complained that the last Cowasjee's boat which called at Hodaïdah on its way back from Jizan had no cargo space available for Hodaïdah merchants, owing to having filled up with Jizan merchandise. I have now arranged with Messrs. Cowasjee, Dinshaw and Brothers to reserve half their space for Hodaïdah, and to inform me, for Major Meek's information whenever a Jizan ship is to call at Hodaïdah.

(b.) Lower Yemen.

18. A local correspondent has heard that the Zaid force from Jebel Saber went to Mawia. They were received by Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Muqbil, who delivered to them all the guns, and arms and ammunition left there by the Turks except one machine gun and one field gun. The Zaidis have removed the guns to Tais. 100 Zaidis are stationed in Mawia. The same correspondent reports that about three months ago Sheikh Mahomed Nasir despatched to the imam three mules laden with dollars, and that recently the imam demanded from him 800 bags of jowari, to be delivered to his agent at Tais. As, however, Mahomed Nasir had no jowari, he paid its value, viz., 3,000 dollars, in cash. In paragraph 23 of the last letter I referred to the appointment of Kaid Saleh as the temporary Governor of the Kada of Kamira. The Kadi of Dala, under date the 30th September, 1919, reported that he (Kaid Saleh) is detained at Sana pending recovery of the Turkish arms and ammunition and guns from Sheikh Mohamed Nasir. The latest news is that Kaid Saleh has returned and is practically Governor of Mawia, subject to the orders of Sayed Hassan-al-Warith.

II.—THE IDRISI.

19. Sheikh Ali Hiba Fashiq, of the Zaraniq, and Syed Ali Tahir Sheikh, of the Muasala, are said to have returned to Taif from a visit to the Idrisi.

20. Syed Mustafa was expected to visit Zaidiya in September last, but did not arrive. A report dated the 19th September stated that he would shortly arrive at Lohiya, and from there he would proceed to Bajil, en route to Zaidiya. No report of his arrival has been received. Everything is calm and quiet in the Kazas of Lohiya, Abs and Zaidiya. The people are busy cultivating.

21. Under date the 22nd September, 1919, the Political Officer, Hodaïdah, reports that the sheikhs of the northern and southern Zaraniqs are consulting their Akils with a view to the unanimous election of the Idrisi as their suzerain. The Syeds of Al Jah are said to favour Idrisi rule, and have taken exception to Sheikh Munassar's negotiations with the Quhra. There appears to have been much discussion of the political position and prospects among the Zaraniqs, which has resulted in petty fighting.

III.—ADEN PROTECTORATE.

22. In September last, the Amir of Dala is reported to have received a letter from the imam's councillor, Syed Abdulla-bin-Ibrahim, in which the latter asked the Amir to ascertain for him particulars as to the number and quantities of guns, mules, and arms and ammunition received by Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Muqbil from the Turks, and also to furnish similar information as to the guns, &c., carried away by Mahomed Nasir from the Amir himself. Syed Abdulla also asked the Amir to let him know whether the mission to the imam was English, German, or of what other nationality, and added that an army under the leadership of Syed Ali-bin-Abdulla-bin-Al Imam was being despatched against the Amir, but that Syed Ali, the commander, was ordered by the imam not to ask anything from the Amir. This news was received from the Qazi of Dala, who was requested by me to send the letter, but has not done so.

23. The Amir has not complied with this Residency invitation to come to Aden to make submission, but has written a long letter, from which it appears that he does not wish to come personally to make his submission. He has sent his agent, the Qazi of Dala to explain matters personally. From the latter's explanation I gather that the Amir does not wish to come to Aden as he fears that the imam will attack Dala should he do so. The Qazi says that even if he remained in Dala the Amir dreads an attack sooner or later. The imam has not approached him directly, but he has been told verbally that he should see the Imam's Amil at Kataba. This is imamic policy. If a letter were sent to Amir Nasir it would be evidence against the imam, but if Amir Nasir obeyed the verbal summons it would be said that he went willingly. I have written to him again and have promised him safety while in Aden. If his explanation is then found satisfactory and he is accordingly restored to Government favour, I have further promised to protect him against aggression from beyond the borders now and hereafter.

24. Reports continue to reach me of imamic intrigue in the Aden Protectorate, more especially in the Dala neighbourhood. I have accordingly written to the imam to inform him that such news has been reaching me, but that I am sure, if it be true, that any action taken by his lieutenants must be without his sanction. I have also requested him to withdraw the customs house which he has established at Sanah within the Aden Protectorate.

Yours, &c.

J. M. STEWART.

[152848/ME 58]

No. 73.

Memorandum by Mr. McDonell, respecting the Evacuation of Batoum and Bolshevism in the Middle East.

SINCE it seems impossible to discuss the province and port of Batoum without raising the whole of the Caucasian question, I propose to commence with a short résumé of events leading up to the present situation in the Caucasus since the 4th August, the date of the last meeting.

General.—British troops have been evacuated from the territories of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, with the exception of the province and port of Batoum.

Mr. Wardrop, British Chief Commissioner in Transcaucasia, has arrived at Tiflis with his staff. He has made a tour of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, and has been very well received by all sections of the public. Colonel Stokes is acting as military representative to the Azerbaijan Republic at Baku, Captain Gracey to the Armenian Republic at Erivan, and Captain Hulls as liaison officer at Tiflis; all report through Mr. Wardrop. Major Teague Jones, formerly of the Indian Police, is shortly proceeding to Tiflis to act as special intelligence officer to report on Bolshevik activities in Central Asia and the Middle East. Mr. Wardrop has applied for a commercial attaché with a good knowledge of finance. Colonel Haskell, an American officer, has been appointed Allied High Commissioner for Armenia. His appointment seems originally to have been intended to deal mainly with relief, and he was nominated at Mr. Hoover's instigation. This officer does not seem to have made many friends either among the natives or his Allied colleagues. His policy seems to alternate between domination and vacillation.

The remnants of the Italian Mission still remain in the Caucasus, but are recognised as purely concession hunting.

Georgia has also sent a commercial mission to Rome.

Relations between the three Republics.

Georgia and Azerbaijan have concluded a defensive alliance against attack from the Volunteer Army for a period of three years. Armenia was invited to join the alliance but refused.

The military establishment of these three republics is approximately as follows:—

Georgia: 60,000 regulars, 5,000 officers.

Azerbaijan: 20,000 regulars, 1,000 officers.

" 20,000 irregulars.

Armenia: 40,000 regulars, 1,500 officers.

There has been a marked improvement in the relationship between Georgia and Azerbaijan. Both the republics, however, maintain a very distrustful attitude towards Armenia on account of—

1. Armenia's apparently friendly attitude towards Denikin.
2. Intrigues of the Dashnaks both in Georgia and Azerbaijan.
3. Old outstanding territorial claims of Armenia against Georgia in Borchalinsk and against Azerbaijan in Nakhichivan and Zangazur.

Georgia has, however, during the last week come to an agreement with Armenia granting her general transit through Georgia free of customs duties. This is due to strong representations made by Mr. Wardrop to the Georgian Government who were holding up relief supplies to Armenia.

Trouble, and in some places fighting, is taking place between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the disputed areas round Zangazur. Colonel Haskell put forward a proposal for a temporary settlement. A neutral zone was proposed in the province of Nakhichivan to be administered by an Allied Governor-General, but, at the same time, the province of Zangazur was granted to the Armenians, thus establishing Armenians on either side of the neutral zone and granting them a corridor to the north of that zone. This seems to have pleased nobody. The Armenians claim Nakhichivan, Zangazur and Karabach, while Azerbaijan claims Zangazur as an integral part of their republic; however, they are apparently willing themselves to administer Karabach with Armenian officials. The Mohammedan inhabitants of Nakhichivan have now refused to accept Colonel Haskell's representative, Colonel Daly, as Governor-General.

Azerbaijan seems convinced that Denikin is backing the Armenians, who are moving troops to Nakhichivan.

Georgia is acting as intermediary between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the hopes of maintaining peace.

Relations of the Republics to Denikin.

Armenia.—The relations of these people to Denikin remain much the same. The Armenian Society "Dashnaks," which controls most of the Armenian policy, although strongly socialistic and revolutionary, willingly accepts Denikin's assistance and advice pending a settlement of the Caucasian question. The Russian officers with the Armenians are mostly under Denikin's orders. Denikin has lately applied for leave to transport through Batoum to Armenia one battalion of Armenians raised and equipped from the Volunteer Army at Taganrog.

Georgia.—Relations between Georgia and Denikin are as, if not more, strained than before, and all attempts to come to an agreement seem to have failed for the following reasons:—

1. Denikin's policy of a united Russia destroys Georgian independence.
2. Denikin continues to keep armed forces on the Bzyb front.
3. Denikin contends that the Georgian Government is actively assisting the insurgents in Daghestan.
4. His blockade of Georgia.

On the other hand—

1. The Georgians consider their independence guaranteed by the doctrine of self-determination and their national history.
2. There seems to be no necessity for Denikin to keep any armed force on the Bzyb front, since the Georgians have no intention of attacking him and that district is free of Bolsheviks.
3. Although there are undoubtedly individual Georgian Bolsheviks and others stirring up Daghestan, there is no evidence that the Georgian Government is in any way assisting the insurgents. Repeated assurances have been given to Mr. Wardrop that the Government deprecates any such assistance. The Georgian Government has offered to send a mission to Denikin to clear up all questions. This mission Denikin has refused to receive.
4. The blockade affects the whole of the Caucasus, including Azerbaijan and the Batoum Province.

Azerbaijan.—Relations between Azerbaijan and Denikin were formerly of a more or less friendly nature. Denikin believed that Azerbaijan's claim to independence was

only voiced by a few political agitators and that he would have no difficulty in eventually subjugating the Tartars. However, lately relations with Azerbaijan have become strained owing to—

1. Denikin's demand that the Azerbaijan Republic cease flying their flag on the Caspian Sea. He refers them to the Russo-Persian Treaty of Turcomanshaie, which also prohibits the Persian flag.
2. Denikin's accusation that Azerbaijan is actively assisting the Daghestan insurgents (in spite of the fact that in their press and speeches the insurgents show much bitterness towards Azerbaijan for not coming to the assistance of their brother Moslems).
3. The general attitude of Denikin's fleet and his support of the Armenians.
4. His mismanagement of Daghestan and his proclamation in that district.

All these factors lead Azerbaijan and Georgia to consider the possibility of Denikin:—

1. Attacking Azerbaijan by sea and land through Daghestan while the Azerbaijan army is occupied with the Armenians, and the Bolsheviks at Astrachan are ice-bound and Denikin's northern front forced into inactivity by the winter.
2. Attacking Georgia through the Bzyb front and Armenia with a view to occupying Batoum as soon as we evacuate.

Daghestan and Denikin.—The whole of Daghestan appears to be in a ferment. Certain parts, where Denikin is strong enough in armed force, remain loyal.

This seems to be the result of—

1. Mismanagement on the part of Denikin's administration, which has made a productive soil for—
2. Bolshevik and Turkish intrigues.
3. Intrigues on the part of the former Hill Government, and various Azerbaijan and Georgian sympathisers.

This country was always unsafe under the old régime, and required a large garrison. Even then there were many parts of it which were wisely left alone by the Russians. The disturbances seem to be the natural outcome of handing over a large tract of wild and disturbed country to Denikin, who cannot spare the necessary troops and has not the administrators skilled in handling natives.

Azerbaijan has applied for a mandate to run the country and undertakes to guarantee Denikin's rear.

Bolshevism.—Bolshevism undoubtedly exists in a latent form in Azerbaijan and Georgia, especially amongst the large Russian labour population in Baku.

Considering the unavoidable weakness of the Governments of these republics, it seems greatly to their credit that they have been able to combat it. Nothing is heard of Communist activity in either republic. Of both Bolshevik and Communist activity more is heard from Daghestan and Transcaspia. In these districts the doctrines of Bolshevism seem more freely accepted as a possible antidote to bad local administration by the Russians, and also owing to the subtle overtures made by the Bolsheviks to the Committee of Union and Progress and various Panislamic societies.

Denikin contends that Georgia is already Bolshevik, and that Azerbaijan may become so. This is not confirmed by any of our civil or military representatives on the spot. In fact, all information points to the contrary. They might, however, prefer Bolshevik, not Communist, rule to the old form of Russian administration.

The Moscow Bolsheviks have access to Transcaspia, and information seems to point to their having prepared this country for their headquarters in event of Denikin and others pushing them out of Russia.

Batoum.—This province is, of course, ethnologically Georgia. Before our evacuation it ought to be decided to whom we intend handing over. Should we evacuate without formulating some agreement between the contending parties it would be a signal for an occupation by Denikin, and an attack on Georgia by his forces through the Bzyb front.

From information received Denikin's agents are intriguing in this area, and protests have been received by Mr. Wardrop, from the Georgian Government, against our employing Russian officers in an administrative capacity.

M. Maskarashvili, an agent of the Georgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, was shot at and wounded by a Russian Customs official because he objected to the search of

a M. Bammatti, who was travelling on official business for the Georgian Government. A Russian officer arrested the Georgian officials of a railway station because they refused to accept Don money in payment of his fare. Mr. Wardrop reports a good deal of discontent in the Batoum Province owing to the administration of Russian officials.

The administration at present is run by a locally formed executive with a municipal council under British control.

General Newcombe, who is in Transcaucasia on a special mission for the Treasury, reports that the food question is becoming serious, and considerable difficulty is found in getting supplies from the Kuban owing to Denikin's blockade of Georgia (against which we have protested). On the 12th September the General Officer Commanding requested that no more refugees be sent to Batoum.

Oil.—Our requirements of liquid fuel are 4,000 tons monthly for naval purposes, and 2,000 tons monthly for the Anatolian Railway.

The General Officer Commanding, Constantinople, telegraphed on the 20th September, 1919, advising our retention of Batoum to avoid a scramble for it on the part of the Georgians, Russians and Turks, and saw no menace to our garrison, provided we hold the Bosphorus.

The Italians have offered to Georgia to garrison Batoum, while the Georgians ask us to retain it as a coaling station and naval and military base.

The French Embassy enquired on the 4th November as to the status of Batoum, and we informed them that it would be difficult to discuss the question without raising the whole question of Transcaucasian affairs.

Foreign Office, November 15, 1919.

[162833/ME 58]

No. 74.

Mutual Agreement between Prime Minister Khatissian, representing the Government of Armenia, and Prime Minister Ussubbekof, representing the Government of Azerbaijan.

(Enclosure in Mr. Wardrop's despatch No. 96 of November 25, 1919.)

THIS agreement, made and concluded at Tiflis this 23rd day of November, 1919, by and between Prime Minister Khatissian, representing the Government of Armenia, and Prime Minister Ussubbekof, representing the Government of Azerbaijan, witnesseth:

1. That the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan pledge themselves to stop the present hostilities and not resort again to force of arms.
2. That the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan agree to take effective measures for repairing and reopening, for peaceful traffic, the roads leading into Zangezur.
3. That the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan pledge themselves to settle all controversies, including boundaries, by means of peaceful agreements pending the decisions of the conference convened in the following paragraph. In case this is not possible, then to select a neutral party as arbiter, whose decisions both Governments agree to abide by, said neutral party for the present being Colonel James C. Rhea, United States Army.
4. That the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan pledge themselves to immediately appoint an equal number of delegates to meet in conference in Baku on Wednesday, the 26th November, and to adjourn to Tiflis on the 4th December, where the meetings of the conference will continue, unless by common agreement they are transferred elsewhere. This conference will discuss all questions which are the cause of dispute or friction between the two Governments, and will have full authority to settle all such questions by agreement or arbitration.
5. That this agreement becomes effective on the date of signing and becomes permanent when ratified by the Parliaments of the two Governments, and the Prime Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan hereby bind their respective Governments to faithfully support and carry out all the details of the above agreement, in evidence of which they place their respective signatures to this agreement, in triplicate, in English

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and Russian, at Tiflis, this 23rd day of November, 1919, one copy of each being delivered to the representative of the Allied High Commissioner, one of each to the Prime Minister of Armenia and one of each to the Prime Minister of Azerbaijan.

KHATISSIAN,
Prime Minister of Armenia.

USSUBBEKOF,
Prime Minister of Azerbaijan.

Signed in the presence of:

J. C. RHEA, Colonel, G.S., U.S.A.,
Acting Allied High Commissioner.

GUEGUETCHEKORI, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia,
Acting President.

[163684/ME 44]

No. 75.

Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck to Earl Curzon.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 2274.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 5, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that, having received a report (copy enclosed) from my representative at Smyrna to the effect that the French consul-general at that town had been authorised by the French High Commissioner to reopen the French Consular Court, I called upon Mr. Morgan for his views as to the advisability or otherwise of reopening the British Consular Court at Smyrna at the present time.

2. A copy of Mr. Morgan's reply, dated the 21st November, is attached, and I have the honour to request that I may be favoured with your Lordship's instructions as to the action which I should take in the matter.

I have, &c.

J. M. DE ROBECK,
High Commissioner.

Enclosure 1 in No. 75.

Mr. Morgan to British High Commissioner, Constantinople.

(No. 310/10.)

Sir,

Smyrna, October 29, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that my French colleague, M. Laporte, who is also French consul-general in this town, and who has just returned from a visit to Constantinople, has been authorised by the French High Commissioner to reopen the French Consular Court to deal with matters which have been in litigation for some time.

I have, &c.

JAMES MORGAN.

Enclosure 2 in No. 75.

Mr. Morgan to British High Commissioner, Constantinople.

(No. 378/38.)

Sir,

Smyrna, November 21, 1919.

WITH reference to your letter of the 11th November concerning the reopening of the British Consular Court, I have the honour to report that it would certainly be a convenience, especially in the case of minor police-court offences, and in the matter of probate.

For instance, a case has just been brought to my notice where a British subject has tried to stab his father. At present there is no means of dealing with this case, and the man is allowed to be at large.

It would certainly be a great advantage to British subjects if the Probate Court could be opened, as there are a number of wills awaiting probate at present.

On the other hand, the opening of the British Consular Court will entail a great deal of work, one employee of the consulate before the war being usually entrusted solely with judicial work in the capacity of registrar to the Court. It was his duty to prepare all cases and the innumerable forms necessary in connection with them.

As Consular Courts exist in virtue of Capitulations and their powers are defined in Orders in Council, it will be necessary that if the Court were reopened here, it should be supplied with the latest Orders in Council, and should be furnished also with the most recent books on annual practice and on procedure.

I submit that your representative before being charged with the reopening of the Consular Court should be invested with the consular capacity to try cases, administer oaths, issue probate, &c., as at present his appointment as vice-consul in Smyrna is for purposes of salary only.

The same observations would apply to Captain Hole so that he could be entrusted with part of the Court work.

I have, &c.

JAMES MORGAN.

[165726/ME 44]

No. 76.

Political Resident, Aden, to Earl Curzon.—(Received December 29.)

(No. C. 10.)

My Lord,

Aden, December 10, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to forward for your information three copies of my ninth news letter, dated the 10th December, 1919, to his Excellency the High Commissioner, Cairo.

I have, &c.

J. M. STEWART, Major-General.

Enclosure in No. 76.

Ninth Aden News Letter.

Political Resident, Aden, to High Commissioner, Cairo.

(Secret.)

My dear Field-Marshal,

Aden, December 10, 1919.

THE following is a brief record of events reported since the despatch of my letter dated 12th November, 1919:—

IMAM.

Tihama.

From reports received from the Political Officer, Hodeida, it appears that with the exception of Sheikh Munassar Sagheer of the northern Zaraniqs and his small party, the whole Zaraniq country is in favour of electing the Idrisi as their ruler. In a meeting held of all the sheikhs and akils it was declared that the Idrisi would subsidise the three districts of northern and southern Zaraniqs, Ghuleifca and Al-Jah, and that in case he required soldiers to co-operate with his force against Zabeed and Beit-el-Fakih, they would be supplied by these districts. At the same time a deputation from the Idrisi, headed by the Amil of Ichiya, Shereef Yehia-bin-Mahomed-ar-Rifai, has arrived at Beit-el-Fakih. At his invitation all the sheikhs and akils met Shereef Yehia and discussed the question of the Idrisi's rule and decided in favour of it, on condition that the Idrisi gave them material support against the imam. A paper was accordingly signed, sealed and handed over to Shereef Yehia for transmission to the Idrisi. Sheikh Munassar Sagheer refused to sign the document owing to the instigation of a Beit-el-Fakih merchant named Mohamed Ibrahim Mokhawi, on the plea that the Idrisi was really working for the aggrandisement of both himself and the British Government, and not in the interest of religion.

2. It is reported that Sheikh Munassar Sagheer does not favour either the imam or the Idrisi. He is anxious to come under the protection of the British Government. He is, however, one of those who strongly approved the detention of the British Mission at Bajil, and is opposed to its release.

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3. In connection with the Idrisi deputation, Syed Ahmed-el-Ambari, imam's representative at Zabeed, has written to Mahomed Ibrahim Mokhawi, the Beit-el-Fakih merchant, to bribe the Zaranig tribesmen to the extent of 10,000 dollars, or even more if necessary.

4. A correspondent, in a letter dated 24th October last, reported the concentration of imamic troops along the Zaranig frontiers, and the counter-preparations that the Zaranigs were making to resist them. No confirmation of this report has been received.

5. The imam's representative at Zabeed has sent an order to the local sheikhs and merchants to pay, respectively, 6,000 dollars and 3,000 dollars towards the maintenance of a force which the imam intends sending to maintain order in the country. Some of the merchants who were kept in custody pending payment have paid 1,800 dollars and have been released. So far, 4,000 dollars has been recovered and sent to Sana. 300 imamic soldiers are reported to have already arrived in Zabeed.

6. Fighting is reported between the soldiers of the imam and the Idrisi at Jebel Milhan. This conflict appears to have been caused by the revolt of the local sheikhs against the imam's amil there. The sheikhs appealed to the Idrisi amil at Zaidiya, who occupied some places in Jebel Milhan, but the imam's amil on being reinforced ejected him. The Idrisi is said to have sent reinforcements to his amil, who is encamped at Suk-el-Walija.

Jacob Mission and Hodeida.

7. Sheikh Sabel Ali, rival of Suleiman Bukheit, the head sheikh of the Aboos, visited Hodeida early in November. Major Meek considers his visit a great success, in that it was followed by a number of others, including that of Suleiman Bukheit himself. The latter came with a large following and left promising to bring in the Quhra sheikhs.

8. The Aboos sheikhs told Major Meek that after the declaration of the armistice, Mahmud Nadhim wrote to them intimating the fact and of the orders received for the surrender of the Turkish forces in the Yemen to the British. He stated his intention of keeping back the Turks in the Tihama to resist the British who had occupied Hodeida and were to occupy the Yemen pending peace. He asked the sheikhs to prevent the surrender of Turkish troops, and asked them to provide maintenance for them (Turks). The sheikhs replied saying they had suffered heavily in the war and that the Turks should go. He wrote back asking them (sheikhs) to bear at least a quarter of the cost of the maintenance, but, having met with a refusal again, he made a third appeal for the collection of taxes for the support of his Government, but the sheikhs persisted in their refusal.

9. Major Meek says that the Aboos show no particular desire for the return of the Turks. They prefer the Idrisi to the imam, but their general attitude is "Let Government order as seem to them good." They point to the fact that their prosperity depends on Hodeida.

10. Major Meek also received a visit from three Quhra akils on the same day. They said that if the mission was not released, they would depose Sheikh Baghawi and Yehia Ali.

11. Major Meek writes that on the 9th November, 1919, he went to the telegraph office at the request of the Quhra sheikhs, who wished to discuss matters over the wire. They wanted to know whether he had received Colonel Jacob's letter in which he had proposed to hand over Hodeida to Syed Abdul Kadir of Marawa, and, if so, whether he agreed to the proposal. Major Meek replied that he was prepared to discuss matters with the sheikhs in Hodeida, and renewed his invitation to them to come to Hodeida. The sheikhs declined, and told him that he had their safe conduct to Bajil.

12. A report received last month stated that the ex-Vali, as well as all the Quhra sheikhs with the exception of Mahomed Zaid, had expressed themselves in favour of the release of the mission. This sudden change in the ex-Vali so exasperated Mahomed Zaid that he threatened the ex-Vali with his jambia, accusing him of being the originator of the plot who was now turning traitor.

13. The mulazim of gendarme at Bajil, one Syed Hassan, is said to have written to Sheikh Munassar Sagheer and Mahomed Ibrahim Mokhawi of Beit-el-Fakih to say that the Turks will return to Hodeida, and that the ex-Vali, Mahmud Nadhim, is in communication with Constantinople. The object of this letter must be to discourage syyeds and mansabs visiting Hodeida.

14. The latest reports show that the aeroplane reconnaissance over Bajil, although it threatened at first to end disastrously for the mission, has had an excellent effect,

and brought before the recalcitrant sheikhs the fact that they and their villages are within reach of bombing raids. The result is that several sheikhs and akils have written to Major Meek promising that Colonel Jacob and his companions will be returned within a week. This is largely Arab evasion, but there is no doubt that aeroplane visit caused terror, and I think it has advanced the day for Colonel Jacob's release. Mahmud Nadhim still continues to be our chief opponent.

Sheikh Mahomed Nasir Mukbil.

15. A messenger who recently arrived with a letter from the imam states that the imamic troops under Sayed Hassan-bin-Abdul Wahab-al-Warith occupy Mawia, and that there are many troops cantoned at Mawia, being sent out into the district as required. Quid Saleh is in charge of the tribes, and Mahomed Nasir Mukbil is living in retirement.

ADEN PROTECTORATE.

16. Sheikh Mohsin Musa-al-Rifai of Rubeaten reports that there are 100 Zaidis in Jabel Jihaf. Eighty-five Zaidis visited the Ahmadi, Mehrabi and Azraki tracts, and carried away the sheikhs from the villages of Al Hakl, Husan Kohlan and Dar-al-Miqtar (or Muktar). The sheikhs' names are Abdul Karim Awwas the Ahmadi, Abdalla Ahmed the Mibrabi and Hussain Ahmed the Azraki. The informant saw these sheikhs at Dala on the 16th November. They are all from our protectorate. The Zaidis appear to have been a mere foraging party.

17. According to the latest reports the encroachments of the Zaidis are increasing, and places in the Amiri and Haushabi territory have been visited and looted by them. The amir himself is in Aden, and has applied to me for help to turn out the Zaidis. He is afraid to go back as he thinks he would be imprisoned, and I have given him permission to remain at Lahej as a Government guest until the situation is clearer. I have not yet received replies to the communications addressed to the imam.

18. The Haushabi Sultan has sent in letters he has received from the imam's lieutenant, Sayed Hassan-bin-Abdul Wahhab-al-Warith, asking the Haushabi to come and see him. The imam's lieutenant says that the imam has telegraphed to him not to exceed his instructions. (This may mean that Zaidi encroachments are due to over-zealous amils, but I still await the imam's reply to my letters regarding encroachments.) The imam, says the lieutenant, accuses the Haushabi of aggression by some of his men against the subjects of Ar Rona and Uzlat. These places are within our protectorate, and at present occupied by the Zaidis. The Haushabi asks us to send our troops to Nobat Dakim. I have made him a suitable reply. The Abdali Sultan is very nervous over the present state of affairs, and urges the adoption of early measures for the ejection of the Zaidis from the protectorate.

Zaidis are reported to have entered Rubeaten and Nawa.

19. A report has reached me to the effect that Jibuti has re-started arms trade. I am causing enquiries to be made as to the truth of the report. France, I understand, like all the Allies, is committed to restricting the sale of arms.

Yours, &c.

J. M. STEWART.

[163694/ME 44]

No. 77.

Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck to Earl Curzon.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 2284.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 6, 1919.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 21st October, relative to the encroachment of Greek courts-martial on Ottoman courts at Smyrna, I have the honour to forward herewith for your Lordship's information copy of a letter, dated the 16th October, which the French High Commissioner has addressed to his representative at Smyrna on the subject, and copy of a report, dated the 22nd November, which I have received from my representative there commenting thereon.

2. As Mr. Morgan remarks, there appears to be no redress for a British subject who has been injured by an Ottoman, under the present arrangements. As the matter is of some urgency I should be glad to receive telegraphic instructions from your Lordship as to the procedure which should be followed in such cases.

I have, &c.

J. M. DE ROBECK,
High Commissioner.

Enclosure 1 in No. 77.

*French High Commissioner, Constantinople, to French Delegate, Smyrna.**Constantinople, le 16 octobre 1919.*

J'AI l'honneur de vous transmettre sous ce pli copie d'une lettre qui m'a été adressée, à la date du 17 du mois dernier, par le Ministre ottoman des Affaires étrangères concernant l'extension excessive que les cours martiales helléniques de Smyrne donneraient à leur compétence.

Je vous serai obligé de vous renseigner sur les faits visés dans cette communication et de me faire connaître le résultat de vos recherches.

En principe, les conseils de guerre aux armées sont compétents pour connaître de tous les crimes ou délits reprochés à des habitants, quels qu'ils soient, des pays occupés concernant des faits commis par eux contre ou au préjudice des militaires des armées occupantes ou intéressant la sûreté du corps d'occupation, tels que trahison, espionnage, embauchage pour le compte de l'ennemi, révolte, crimes ou délits contre le devoir militaire, &c. A Constantinople, où les Alliés sont investis d'une mission officielle de police entraînant la subordination de la police turque, la justice militaire française est valablement saisie aussi de toutes infractions de police. En conséquence et par application des décrets du 3 août et du 3 novembre 1914, qui ont étendu leur compétence à ces matières, les conseils de guerre français connaissent ici des crimes ou délits commis sur ou au préjudice des citoyens français. La cour martiale hellénique à Smyrne pourrait avoir la même compétence si, d'une part, la police ottomane est placée dans la région sous la subordination de l'autorité militaire hellénique et si, d'autre part, les conseils de guerre helléniques avaient été investis, par des actes antérieurs à l'occupation, des pouvoirs qui ont été donnés aux conseils de guerre français en cette matière par les décrets du 3 août et du 3 novembre 1914.

Les Hauts-Commissaires transmettent au Commissaire de Grèce à Constantinople copie de la lettre de la Porte ci-dessus visée.

Je vous prie de me tenir au courant des changements qui pourraient être apportés par l'autorité militaire hellénique à Smyrne à la jurisprudence des cours martiales de cette ville à la suite de cette démarche.

Je crois devoir vous rappeler, en terminant, ma lettre du 4 juillet concernant deux officiers turcs qui, au dire de la Porte, auraient été arrêtés à Scalanova et conduits à Smyrne, où ils auraient été déférés à la cour martiale. Je vous prie de me renseigner sur les conditions de cette arrestation et sur la suite qui a été donnée à cette affaire.

Veuillez agréer, &c.

A. DEFRANCE.

Enclosure 2 in No. 77.

Mr. Morgan to British High Commissioner, Constantinople.

(No. 381/38.)

Smyrna, November 22, 1919.

SUPPLEMENTARY to my letter No. 378/38 of the 21st November concerning the opening of the British Consular Court, I have the honour to refer to your despatch of the 27th October enclosing a report on French procedure in Constantinople as regards the jurisdiction of courts-martial.

In that report it is said that the French court-martial in Constantinople takes cognisance of all crimes or misdemeanours committed on or against French citizens by the inhabitants of occupied districts.

Should it happen here that an Ottoman subject committed a crime against a British subject it is not likely that the Turkish authorities would be allowed to try the case, firstly, because they would maintain that, as Capitulations were abolished, no British representative could assist, and secondly, because the Greek authorities would not allow them to take up the case but would insist that crimes should be tried by a Greek tribunal.

This latter contention could not be admitted, so that there would be no redress for a British subject who had been injured.

Unless also some extension of powers was given to a British Consular Court to enable it to try cases such as the above, the matter would have to remain over until the conclusion of peace.

I have, &c.

JAMES MORGAN.

[159413/ME 58]

No. 78.

*Foreign Office to War Office.**Foreign Office, December 15, 1919.*

Sir,

WITH reference to your letter of the 8th instant,* to Mr. Wardrop's telegrams Nos. 178* and 184* of 4th and 6th December respectively, copies of which are enclosed for convenience of reference, and to Denmiss telegram I.P. 2999 of 26th November, I am directed by Earl Curzon of Kedleston to state that his Lordship views with great concern the present acute state of relations prevailing between General Denikin and Georgia, which he regards as fraught with the gravest possible consequences to the whole peace of Transcaucasia. A recent telegram from General Holman stated that General Denikin considered himself in a state of war with Georgia on account, apparently, of a declaration of war alleged to have been made by the latter in May of this year. Mr. Wardrop has been asked by telegraph to report as to this declaration, of which his Lordship has had no previous intimation.

2. However this may be, it is undoubted that General Denikin has recently ordered the following steps to be taken with regard to Georgia which can only be described as unfriendly acts, closely akin to war measures:—

- (1.) He has closed his mission at Tiflis;
- (2.) He has refused to receive, or to allow General Holman to receive, a Georgian Mission;
- (3.) He has ordered the seizure of the Georgian guard-ship "Chorok";
- (4.) He has enforced restrictions against trade with Georgia.

3. On their side the Georgians are reported to be expelling Russian subjects from their territory (see War Office letter of 5th December).

4. Lord Curzon is well aware that General Denikin justifies his measures of aggression on the ground that the Georgians have not evacuated the town of Gagri and retired to the Bzyb river, which was fixed last summer as the line of demarcation between General Denikin's area and Transcaucasia. The Georgians on their side contend that the Bzyb river is a militarily indefensible front.

5. Lord Curzon does not consider that time and circumstances permit of entering into any investigation of the rights and wrongs of these respective points of view, and he would therefore suggest, for the early consideration of the Army Council, that instructions should be issued respectively to General Holman and Mr. Wardrop to propose a settlement of the outstanding differences between Denikin and Georgia on the following lines:—

- (1.) The Georgians shall retire to the Bzyb;
- (2.) British control officers (to be nominated in consultation with Mr. Wardrop) shall be placed in the Gagri zone to prevent any attack by Denikin;
- (3.) The Georgian vessel "Chorok" shall be released by Denikin;
- (4.) Denikin shall abandon all economic measures directed specifically against Georgia or Transcaucasia;
- (5.) Georgia shall undertake not to proceed with the expulsion of Russian nationals from her territory.

6. With reference to the fourth of these conditions, Lord Curzon would draw the attention of the Army Council to the fact that Major Pinder, in his report on the question, copy of which is enclosed for convenience of reference, appears to consider it too much from the point of view of interference with British trade, and from that of General Denikin's relations with the Kuban Rada. For the moment, at least, His Majesty's Government are not primarily concerned with either of these aspects of the matter.

7. Lord Curzon considers it very unfortunate that General Denikin should have prohibited the entry of Russian ships into Georgian ports, as well as the export of Russian goods to Georgia and elsewhere in Transcaucasia.

8. With reference to the second paragraph of the War Office letter of the 8th December, his Lordship does not dispute that the prohibition of exports is within General Denikin's "rights," but would point out that it is nevertheless, as stated

* Not printed.

above, in the nature of an "unfriendly act," to be deplored at the present time on account of its possible effect on the maintenance of peace between General Denikin and Transcaucasia.

9. Lord Curzon would therefore be glad to know at as early a date as possible whether the Army Council are prepared to transmit instructions on the above lines to General Holman, in which case his Lordship will issue similar instructions to Mr. Wardrop.

10. I am to add, with reference to War Office letter of the 10th December, to which a separate reply is being returned, that Lord Curzon does not consider it possible to formulate any definite proposals as regards either Trans- or Ciscaucasia, pending the arrival of Mr. Mackinder's Mission at General Denikin's headquarters and the receipt of his report. It is, however, emphatically the policy of His Majesty's Government to prevent any attack by General Denikin on the Transcaucasian republics.

I am, &c.

J. A. C. TILLEY.

[163107/ME 44]

No. 79.

M. Cambon to Earl Curzon.—(Received December 18.)

LE Haut-Commissaire français à Constantinople a signalé à son Gouvernement la situation assez particulière dans laquelle se trouvent en Turquie, depuis la conclusion de l'armistice, les Yougo-Slaves, Monténégrins, Tchéco-Slovaques et, d'une façon générale, les ressortissants soit d'États alliés qui n'avaient pas antérieurement à la guerre la pleine jouissance du régime des Capitulations, soit d'États également alliés qui se sont constitués au cours de la guerre.

Cette question a été examinée à diverses reprises par la Commission économique de la Conférence de la Paix. Le Conseil suprême a même été amené à se prononcer à ce sujet, le 17 septembre dernier, à propos de la Bulgarie et de la rédaction de l'article 175 du Traité de Paix avec cette Puissance.

En ce qui concerne la Turquie, le Gouvernement français estime qu'en droit, les Tchéco-Slovaques, pas plus que les Yougo-Slaves ou les Monténégrins, ne peuvent se prévaloir d'un régime conventionnel. Mais, en fait, les principales Puissances alliées et associées ont reconnu l'existence de l'État tchéco-slovaque en tant qu'État cobelligérant et allié. Il en résulte que, jusqu'à la conclusion du Traité de Paix avec la Turquie, les Tchéco-Slovaques, et avec eux les Polonais, les Yougo-Slaves et les Monténégrins, devraient se trouver dans la même situation que les autres Alliés, comme eux occupants d'un territoire ennemi.

Dans ces conditions, l'Ambassadeur de France serait heureux de savoir si le Gouvernement britannique serait disposé à adopter le point de vue français pour l'établissement d'un régime provisoire que la prolongation de l'état d'armistice avec la Turquie rend chaque jour plus nécessaire.

M. Paul Cambon saisit, &c.

Ambassade de France, Londres, le 18 décembre 1919.

[163512/ME 58]

No. 80.

Earl Curzon to Mr. Wardrop (Tiflis).

(No. 142.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, December 22, 1919.

FOREIGN OFFICE and War Office regard with serious concern present strained relations prevailing between Georgia and the Volunteer Army, the continuance of which may endanger the whole peace of Transcaucasia besides compromising the success of General Denikin's operations against the Bolsheviks, to which peaceful conditions in his rear are essential.

2. Without endeavouring to determine the responsibility for the present situation or entering upon any discussion on the rights or wrongs of the past, you should

endeavour, in conjunction with General Holman, to bring about a settlement between the two parties on the following basis:—

- (1.) The Georgians shall retire to the Bzyb;
- (2.) British control officers (to be nominated by General Holman in consultation with you) shall be placed in the Gagri zone to prevent any infringement of the terms arranged;
- (3.) Georgian vessel "Chorok" shall be released by Denikin;
- (4.) Denikin shall abandon all economic measures directed specifically against Georgia or Transcaucasia;
- (5.) Georgia shall undertake not to proceed with expulsion of Russian nationals from her territory.

3. I hope and consider that the above conditions will afford fair basis for a settlement. In order to increase chances of success and ensure co-operation you should take earliest possible opportunity of meeting General Holman and of discussing this proposal with him before approaching the Georgian Government. War Office are telegraphing him similar instructions, instructing him also to lay the whole situation before Mr. Mackinder on the latter's arrival.

This should not, however, be awaited.

No. 81.

Memorandum respecting the Transcaucasian Republics.

(Confidential.)

THE component parts of Transcaucasia were incorporated in the Russian Empire at various dates. The whole of this country only finally came under Russian rule in 1878, when, under the terms of the Treaty of Berlin, Turkey ceded the provinces of Batoum, Olti and Ardahan to Russia.

The people inhabiting this country are Moslems (both Shi'ahs and Sunnis), Christians (Orthodox Greek and Russian, Armenians, Lutherans), and Jews. There are supposed to be eighteen distinct races and forty-eight different dialects.

The area is as present divided into four districts:—Georgia, the Armenian Republic of Erivan, the Azerbaijan Republic and the Batoum province. In the notes which follow, however, it has been necessary to take account also of the province of Daghestan which, though lying to the north of the main Caucasus range, was included in the old Russian administrative area, and is a prominent factor in the present situation.

The population of Transcaucasia was estimated in 1915 at about 7,000,000, composed of—

- 1,650,000 Georgians.
- 1,200,000 Armenians.
- 2,000,000 Moslems (Tartars and tribesmen).
- 700,000 Daghestan hill tribes.
- 325,000 Russians.
- 1,200,000 European colonists, foreigners, Jews, &c.

The natural resources of Transcaucasia have, under Russian influence, remained practically undeveloped, with the exception of the oilfields round Baku, the manganese deposits in Georgia and the large copper deposits in the Batoum province. Lack of communications and the restrictions placed by the former Russian Government on foreign capital probably account for this state of affairs. In and around the main Caucasus range are to be found copper, oil, lead, iron, coal and other minerals, together with immense wealth of timber. An important fishing industry flourishes on the shores of the Caspian, where also are to be found large supplies of Glauber salts. In the development of waterpower also the country is rich in potentialities, as yet practically unexploited.

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Position before the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Previous to the Revolution Transcaucasia was administered as an integral part of the Russian Empire under a Viceroy whose seat was at Tiflis. The country was divided into six Government departments, i.e., Black Sea provinces, Kutais, Tiflis, Baku, Erivan, Elizavetpol, and the then provinces of Batoum, Kars and Daghestan.

Development since the Revolution.

In 1917, when the Russian army left the Caucasian front with the cry of "Peace without annexation and indemnities!" and thus exposed the whole country to the attack of the Turks, a Transcaucasian Diet was formed at Tiflis in the shape of a coalition of Georgians, Tartars, and Armenians, with a view to the creation of a Federated Caucasus, and to the defence of the frontiers against Turkish invasion. This attempt at combination proved abortive. The Tartars of Azerbaijan were in open sympathy with the Turks, while the Armenians considered that the Georgians were attempting to establish a central Georgian Administration to govern the Caucasus from Tiflis.

Subsequently at various dates and under different auspices the three districts known as Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia established their own Governments and declared themselves independent republics. Although these republics are not formally recognised by His Majesty's Government, a certain *de facto* recognition is implied in the despatch to Tiflis last summer of Mr. Oliver Wardrop as chief British Commissioner in Transcaucasia. The measure of local recognition necessarily accorded by our military representatives during the period of British occupation is referred to below.

Short Historical Sketch of the several Areas.

(a.) *Batoum Province.*

The Batoum province would seem to have belonged to the old Kingdom of Georgia as early as the seventh century. In the fifteenth century the Georgians lost it to the Turks, who eventually ceded it to the Russians in 1878.

The province was again ceded to Turkey in 1917 by the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. The Georgian National Assembly, not recognising this treaty, declared war on Turkey, but were unable to prevent her from overrunning the province, which remained in Turkish hands until the British occupied it in accordance with clause 15 of the Turkish Armistice Terms, an occupation which is still in force.

(b.) *Georgia.*

The origin of the ancient Kingdom of Georgia belongs to the pre-Christian era. In the Middle Ages—to go no farther back—she played a prominent part in the later Crusades. Her history for several centuries thereafter is a long and chequered story of struggle with Turks and Persians. On the expansion of Russia towards the south, Georgia offered to unite with her northern neighbour to free the Caucasus from Turkish rule. In 1783 she concluded a treaty with Catherine II of Russia pledging her support to Russia in return for her complete internal independence. However, in 1801 Russia annexed Georgia, promising to maintain her previous rights and privileges in their entirety. Thus promise Russia never fulfilled, and the Georgians made the grievances arising from this breach of faith the subject of a fruitless petition addressed to The Hague Conference in 1907.

The Transcaucasian Diet, formed after the Russian Revolution, continued a chequered existence until June 1918. During this period, the British Military Mission at Tiflis, under the late Lieutenant-Colonel Pike, endeavoured to give it all the moral support possible, and financed it with a loan of 4,000,000 roubles in the hope that under the predominating influence of the Georgian statesmen, Jordani and Gegechkori, both members of the former Russian Duma, the Diet would be maintained and would continue the war on the side of the Allies.

Owing to the conflicting interests of the various races and to Bolshevism in the Georgian army, this policy failed. The establishment of a separate Georgian Parliament and a declaration of Georgian independence was the eventual outcome. The trend of Georgian domestic policy since that date is dealt with below in its relation to Bolshevism. It will suffice to note here that recent reports testify to the remarkable growth of local government in Georgia. The Zemstva, established under the old Russian Government, have come to play a far more prominent part in the life

of the country than was ever the case under the old régime. They have wide local powers and are shortly to send their own elected representative to the Central Parliament at Tiflis.

According to Russian statistics (which include the province of Batoum) the country has an area of 13,456 square miles and a population of 2,512,000, including—

1,530,000	Georgians (Christian and Moslem).
260,000	Armenians.
129,000	Russians.
213,000	Turki-speaking Moslems.
126,000	Moslem tribesmen.

(c.) *The Armenian Republic of Erivan.*

The Armenian provinces of Erivan and Nachichevan were ceded to Russia by Persia in accordance with the Treaty of Turkmanchai in 1828, while the rest of Caucasian Armenia came definitely under Russian rule in 1878, when the provinces of Kars, Olti and Ardahan were ceded to Russia by Turkey under the Treaty of Berlin.

The future of the Caucasian Armenians must inevitably be bound up with that of the Turkish Armenians, hundreds of thousands of whom are at present refugees in Transcaucasia. The Caucasian Armenians, while not so cultured as the Georgians, are thrifty and industrious. But the politics of the Erivan Republic are dominated by the notorious Armenian secret society known as "Dashnaksutiun," which, with its programme of revenge and agitation, has recently manifested anti-British tendencies.

This society is violently socialistic and revolutionary in origin, but its present policy in the Caucasus is centred on—

1. The acquisition of territory for the Erivan Republic;
2. The extension and equipment of the Armenian armed forces; and
3. The propagation of the doctrine of the Dashnaks.

It seems improbable that sound democratic government will be attained in the Erivan Republic until the activities of this society have been ended. The society by its methods of terrorism prevents the better and broader-minded elements of Armenian society from taking up official positions. M. Khatissian, the Prime Minister, though himself at one time a Dashnak, has been often in conflict with the advanced members of the society, while M. Papandjanian, a former member of the Russian Duma, and a representative of Armenia at the Peace Conference, is recently reported to have retired owing to differences of opinion with the society.

According to Russian statistics, the population of the districts composing the present Republic of Erivan was estimated in 1912 at 1,081,000, of whom just under 600,000 were Armenians, and the rest Moslems. In addition there were some 700,000 Armenians scattered up and down the rest of Transcaucasia, there being 230,000 in Georgia, 180,000 in Azerbaijan, and between 200,000 and 300,000 in the province of Batoum and the areas disputed between the respective republics (see map*).

In addition to the native population, it is estimated that there are in the Erivan Republic at present about 300,000 refugees from Turkish Armenia, and some 30,000 Assyrians.

Throughout Transcaucasia there is no more pressing problem than that of relief. But at the present time the Armenian Republic is economically in a probably worse state than any country in the world. The towns and villages are full of refugees, the country has been devastated by the Turks. Food is hard to get, and in spite of the efforts of the American Relief Commission, there is much sickness and starvation, while, until at least quite recently, there has been continual fighting between Armenian and Moslem in the districts disputed with Azerbaijan.

(d.) *The Azerbaijan Republic.*

This province was ceded to Russia by Persia under the Treaty of Gulistan in 1813. Unlike Georgia it has had no previous history as an independent State.

Before the advent of Russia the country was alternately under Georgian, Turkish and Persian rule. The inhabitants are a Persian type of Shiah Moslem, and their language is a Turkish dialect.

The territorial area of the present republic is about 32,500 square miles, with a population of about 2,000,000, of whom 60 per cent. are Mahomedans, 20 per cent. Armenians, 6 per cent. Russians, the remainder being Persians, Jews, &c. (Russian statistics).

* Not reproduced.

The Apsheron Peninsula, on which the town of Baku is situated, is, in the eyes of the Russians at least, probably the most important district in all Transcaucasia. Large oil deposits in this district produced in normal times the greater part of the oil fuel consumed in Russia. The port of Baku affords an easy means of communication with Astrakan and, by way of the Volga, with all the main waterways of Russia, thus giving cheap and easy transport for the oil to the various markets. The town itself is a large supply centre and a depôt which feeds the Caucasus, Transcaspia, and North Persia with Russian supplies and foreign imports of all kinds. Although situated on an inland sea, Baku is the largest shipping centre in the former Russian Empire. It has a fine natural harbour with adequate docks and repair yards. In former times the shipping was mostly built on the Clyde and floated down the canals to the Volga on pontoons, and thence to Baku. However, of late years a certain amount of construction has been carried on in Baku itself. Apart from its oil, Baku has also important flour and cotton mills, the latter being fed by raw cotton from Transcaspia.

The Prime Minister who formed the first Cabinet was Khan Khoisky, a highly educated and extremely competent lawyer. He, however, subsequently gave place to M. Ussubekoff, an educated Tartar, of somewhat broader principles. It is reported that M. Ussubekoff is forming a new Cabinet, on which it is hoped Khan Khoisky will find a place as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

A Cabinet of which M. Ussubekoff, Khan Khoisky and General Mechmandaroff are members would be in a strong position, and likely to take a liberal outlook on the Armenian question.

As a whole the Azerbaijan Government may be considered more conservative than socialist. The wealthy merchant class is standing outside the actual Government, as it considers its influence more powerful when used indirectly.

(e.) *Daghestan.*

This province, formerly under the native khans, and lying to the north of the main Caucasus range, was also ceded by Persia to the Russians under the Treaty of Gulistan in 1813. It is a mountainous country peopled by wild hill tribes of various origin. After the Russian Revolution it formed itself into the so-called "North Caucasus Republic," which sent delegates to the Peace Conference. Like Azerbaijan, the province has never been an independent State, and its people seem even less fit for self-determination. His Majesty's Government have therefore acquiesced in the occupation of the province by Denikin. The present position seems to be that a large part of the population have accepted the return to Russian rule, while another part are opposing the Volunteer Army by force and demanding independence or union with Azerbaijan.

Petrovsk is the Caspian port of Daghestan. As a port it is inferior to Baku, but it has grown considerably in importance with the expansion of the Grozni oil fields (which are themselves situated in the Terek Cossack province).

Character and Aims of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.

(a.) *Common factors.*

All three republics have three factors in common:—

1. Their genuine desire for independence.
2. Their desire to combat Bolshevism of the Soviet variety (as distinct from Socialistic principles of Government, which are accepted, notably by Georgia).
3. Their fear of Denikin and his policy of a United Russia (this is true in a less degree of the Armenians, who regard their reincorporation in Russia as precluded by the declarations made by the Allies during the war).

(b.) *Internal Situation of the Republics.*

With the exception of Georgia, the republics suffer considerably from the lack of experienced administrators. This want adds greatly to the difficulties of the situation in Azerbaijan and Armenia, both of which have been devastated during the war to an extent which renders reconstruction of any kind the first necessity of the moment.

There are, nevertheless, hopeful signs. In Azerbaijan, the town of Baku is reported to be extremely well administered. The streets are well kept, there is an efficient police force, and the tramway service has recently been restarted. An army of about 30,000 men has been created in spite of difficulties arising from the fact that the Tartars under the old Russian régime were exempt from military service.

In Armenia, M. Khatissian, the Prime Minister, is a broad-minded and honest statesman, who has sacrificed his important business interests in Georgia in order to devote himself to the service of his native country.

The general internal situation of Armenia, owing—

- (a.) To the lack of competent administrators, and
- (b.) To the difficult food situation and the large influx of refugees,

can only be described as deplorable.

Of the three republics, Georgia is in much the best position. Her territory has escaped the ravages of war, while her people, who prided themselves, even under the old Russian régime, on the European origin of their civilisation, have the advantage over their neighbours in ability and culture. Internal order appears to be well maintained, and the sporadic outbursts of Bolshevism which recur at intervals are put down without difficulty and with commendable firmness. Of late the Georgian Government have complained of the All-Russian propaganda carried on in this territory by Denikin's agents and sympathisers sheltering themselves under the British military administration in the province of Batoum.

The economic situation of all the republics is very similar, their currency for purposes of foreign trade having depreciated to a point where it is practically valueless, the latest quotation being 7-800 roubles to the pound sterling. There are practically no imports, and the whole country is suffering from a dearth of manufactured goods, especially agricultural machinery.

The existing railways are marked on the accompanying map.* The Batoum-Baku railway runs through the Batoum province, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, while the Batoum-Tiflis-Erivan-Djulf line passes through Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. A certain amount of rolling-stock and engines was left after the evacuation of the Russian army in 1918, but there is a very considerable shortage in this respect. Owing the lack of material and skilled labour few repairs have been carried out. During the evacuation of the Turkish army after the armistice, most of the existing rolling-stock naturally accumulated at the points where the Turkish troops left the country, notably Batoum and Kars. This led to great trouble, each of the republics refusing to allow rolling-stock and engines to leave its territory. A British railway control was finally established and through traffic provided for. Since the British evacuation, the three republics have by mutual consent continued on the lines set up by the British organisation. But railway control is still a fruitful source of friction, especially between the Georgians and the British authorities at Batoum, who have, perforce, to use a Russian staff for the administration of the line in that province.

A new line was begun by the Russians connecting the Batoum-Baku line at Aliat with the railhead at Djulfa. The Azerbaijan Republic is now offering this work as a concession, and it is even reported to have been definitely acquired by the Italians.

(c.) *Relations one with the other.*

Azerbaijan and Georgia.

These two States have recently formed a defensive alliance against attack by Denikin, which also provides for arbitration in territorial disputes between themselves (see map).*

Before this agreement there had been considerable friction between the republics, due chiefly to the traditional hostility of the Georgians towards the Turks, under whose auspices the present Azerbaijan Republic was founded.

Georgia and Armenia.

In January 1919 Armenia and Georgia were drawn by Turkish intrigue (Denikin supporting Armenia) into war over the disputed territory of Borchalinsk. A peace was arranged by the British Command at Tiflis and the disputed province declared to be a neutral zone. Much of the recent friction between the Armenians and the Georgians is due to the friendly attitude of the Armenian "Dashnaksutun" to General Denikin. Thanks, however, in large part to the efforts of the British Chief Commissioner in Transcaucasia relations have considerably improved of late, and an agreement has now been signed providing for transit of goods free of customs duty between the two countries. This agreement has already resulted in some alleviation of the food situation in Armenia.

* Not reproduced.

Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The strained relations existing between these two republics date back to the Armenian massacres of 1905 in Baku and elsewhere in the Caucasus. The feelings engendered by these massacres were further stimulated during the war by the massacres and deportations of Armenians in Turkey and, on the other side, by massacres of Moslems instigated by the "Dashnaksutiun" in Baku in March 1918 and in Caucasian Armenia in March, April, and May of the same year. Recent fighting has centred round the disputed territories of Nachichevan, Zangazur, Karabakh, and Sharur Daralageuz (see map).*

After an unsuccessful attempt on the part of Colonel Haskell, sent out by the Peace Conference as Allied High Commissioner for Armenia, to settle the quarrel by the creation of Nachichevan as a neutral zone, it is reported in the last few days that an agreement has been reached to settle territorial disputes by arrangement or to refer them to arbitration pending a decision by the Peace Conference or the Allies. The credit for this result must be shared by Mr. Wardrop and by Colonel Rhea (acting for Colonel Haskell during the latter's absence in Paris), but an early solution of the Transcaucasian question would seem to offer the only effective guarantee against a recrudescence of strife.

(d.) *Position of the Republics vis-à-vis Denikin.*

The absolute incompatibility of Denikin's aim of a reunited Russia with the aspirations of the republics for independence has already been noted.

The present military position between the two parties has been determined by the following arrangements:—

1. *On land.*—Early last summer, while the British troops were still in occupation of Transcaucasia, it was thought necessary to draw a dividing line between the spheres of Denikin and his volunteer army and that of the republics. This line follows in the main the central Caucasus range. But at its eastern and western extremities it has twice been subsequently modified (see map*), partly at least under the pressure of events, especially in the case of Daghestan, where the whole province is now occupied by Denikin, and where His Majesty's Government have not felt called upon to embark on a serious dispute with him on behalf of a people whose character holds out no prospect of the creation on a stable basis of an independent State. The opposition which Denikin has been experiencing from part of the Daghestan population is freely attributed by him, not altogether without justification, to the intrigues of Georgia and Azerbaijan, and the situation in Daghestan is therefore a potential danger to the whole peace of the Caucasus.

On the west the dividing line was finally fixed on the River Bzyb, but the Georgians still maintain forces at Gagri on the ground that the Bzyb river is an indefensible front. This question is a lively source of friction, and Denikin has recently refused to receive a Georgian deputation until the withdrawal to the Bzyb has taken place.

2. *On sea.*—As a necessary preliminary to the withdrawal of the British troops from Transcaucasia (with the exception of Batoum) which took place last August, the British naval flotilla in the Caspian, composed almost entirely of former Russian vessels, was handed over to General Denikin on the express stipulation that he should not attempt to force his way into the port of Baku. While he has so far observed this stipulation, he has invoked the Russo-Persian Treaty of Turkmanchai to prevent the Azerbaijan flag being shown in the Caspian either on merchant or war vessels.

In the Black Sea the presence of a British naval force acted as a deterrent to Denikin's war vessels until the Georgians definitely refused to withdraw their forces on the Black Sea littoral to the south of the River Bzyb. Denikin then seized a Georgian guardship off Gagri which, at our request, had been previously disarmed, and one of his warships exchanged several shots with the Georgian guardship at Poti. Against this action the Georgians have entered an official protest.

The hardly latent hostility between Denikin and the republics, with the ever present danger of an explosion, is the key to the whole Transcaucasian position at the present time. Denikin has lately been reported to consider himself in a state of war with Georgia, and at the time of writing is said also to contemplate an attack on Baku, tempted by the prospect of controlling the oil supply there. He has recently brought economic weapons to bear—*e.g.*, he has imposed strict export restrictions against the republics in the area under his control—while the Georgians complain that his representatives at Batoum are carrying on All-Russia propaganda in that province, and are doing their best to discredit and depreciate the Georgian currency.

* Not reproduced.

(e.) *The Republics and Bolshevism.*

Azerbaijan may be regarded as anti-Bolshevik, owing to the influence of the large Tartar landowners or khans and to the presence of a wealthy commercial community. But there is a large Russian working population in Baku which is distinctly Bolshevik in tendency, and is supported by the Moslem society known as "Gumet," which is supposed also to be in close touch with the Committee of Union and Progress.

The Armenians in the Caucasus were regarded by the former Russian Government since 1905 as constituting the extreme revolutionary element in that region. The Dashnaksutiun is of extreme Socialist tendency, but has in the past identified itself impartially with Bolshevism or reaction, in accordance with its own interests. The pernicious influence of this society has already been commented upon, but the vagaries of Armenian politics can only be fairly appreciated if it is remembered that the Armenians in the Caucasus are surrounded on all sides by hostile peoples, and that the experience of history has taught them to regard self-preservation as the one essential tenet of political faith.

The accusation of Bolshevik tendencies is so freely brought against Georgia that it is perhaps worth while pausing to examine how far it may be regarded as well-founded. During the last decade the middle and lower classes in Georgia have shown very distinct socialistic and revolutionary tendencies. Two of the leaders of the Russian revolution under Kerensky were Georgians—Chcheidze and Tseretelli. The probable reason for the attitude of the Georgian people was Russian oppression in which the Russianised Georgian aristocracy took a leading part.

At the time of the Bolshevik *coup d'Etat* the country was riddled with extreme socialism, and the Bolsheviks looked like getting the upper hand. The Georgian Premier, M. Jordani, a democrat, but by no means a socialist, realised that he had no material force other than two regiments of Georgian cavalry, led by reactionary Georgian officers, with which to fight this internal movement; while on the other hand, owing to the desertion of the front by the Russian armies, Georgia was exposed to invasion by the Turk. In pursuance of the old Russian policy of employing troops at a distance from their homes, the Georgian soldiers were on the north-west front in Russia, and it was known that they were deserting and returning to Georgia with their arms. They were saturated with Bolshevik doctrines, and the position seemed hopeless.

M. Jordani therefore invited the Socialists to join his Government, declared a Socialist republic, nationalised all the land, and promised to nationalise all industry. The Georgian army refused to continue the war, and the Georgian Government then accepted Germany's offer of (1) financial assistance; (2) a brigade to maintain internal order; (3) a guarantee that Germany's ally, Turkey, would under no circumstances cross the frontiers of Georgia. In fairness to the Georgians and M. Jordani, it must be remembered that a request for assistance in money and troops was first addressed to the British Military Mission, then at Tiflis, who gave some financial assistance, but were unable at that time to provide troops or accord recognition. From that date (May-June 1918) the whole of the energies of the Georgian Government led by Jordani and Gegechkori have been centred on reconstruction on social democratic principles, and on the expulsion of the Bolshevik elements. Out of the chaos has evolved civilised government; private ownership is permitted up to a limit, order is maintained, and of the three republics Georgia is the most prosperous. The Government and the mass of the people are violently anti-communist. But their independence is to them a very real issue, and since Lenin has offered to recognise them as an independent State, it is more than probable that, if the test came, they would recognise the Soviet Government as representing Russia rather than Denikin.

(f.) *Relations to the Pan-Turanian Movement.*

Pan-Turanian, Turkish, or Pan-Islamic influences play no part in Georgia or Armenia, and by the nature of their history and their religion this block of Christian States will always be actively hostile to any Moslem movement. The Georgian Mussulman seems to be primarily Georgian, and his Turkish or Pan-Islamic tendencies are mainly sentimental.

In Azerbaijan and Daghestan, however, matters are different. While neither of these peoples has any desire to come under Turkish domination, in both countries there is a strong Pan-Islamic movement in existence, and many well-known agitators are at work.

(g.) *Relations to Persia.*

These are of special importance in the case of Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijan is of the same religion (Shiah Moslem), and speaks the same Turki language as the Persian inhabitants of the northern provinces of Persia, including Ghilan and Persian Azerbaijan (the name "Azerbaijan" was given to the republic under Turkish auspices in the expectation that a peace imposed by the Central Powers would provide for the incorporation of Persian Azerbaijan in the republic). Business ties between the two countries are, moreover, traditionally close. The effect of this connection, especially since the Anglo-Persian agreement, has been to strengthen the British position in Azerbaijan, which, before launching out into any definite policy, is undoubtedly waiting to judge the real strength and tendencies of British influence in Persia.

Commitments of the Allies towards Transcaucasia.(a.) *Of the Peace Conference.*

The Peace Conference have allowed delegates of the republics to come to Paris and state their case, and have given sympathetic but non-committal replies.

The Supreme Council have also despatched an "Allied High Commissioner for Armenia" (an American officer, Colonel Haskell) to Transcaucasia with his staff. This mission has concerned itself primarily with relief work, the main burden of which has been borne by the American Relief Commission, an unofficial organisation reported to have expended recently about 600,000*l.* per month in Armenia alone. But it has also exercised a restraining influence in questions of disputed territory, and is no doubt entitled to a share of the credit for the recent arrangements providing for a peaceful settlement of these issues.

(b.) *Of the Individual Allies.*

The British occupied the principal points in Transcaucasia on the conclusion of the Turkish armistice. The primary function of our troops was to secure the withdrawal of the Turkish forces from the confines of the former Russian Empire. When this had been accomplished, and for reasons of economy, the British forces were withdrawn (last August) except from Batoum.

During our occupation the British Military Command gave local recognition to the various Governments and administrative bodies which they found in existence, and announced by proclamation that the occupation was in accordance with the armistice, and that they had no intention of interfering with the internal politics of the country. No other recognition beyond general messages of sympathy has been granted the republics by His Majesty's Government. But, as already stated, Mr. Wardrop was sent to Tiflis on the withdrawal of our troops with the title of "British Chief Commissioner in Transcaucasia," and with instructions to use his best offices to keep the republics (a) from fighting among themselves, (b) from giving any provocation to General Denikin.

Next to this country among the Allies the Italians have played the most conspicuous part in Transcaucasia since the armistice. In the early spring of this year the Peace Conference offered to entrust the control of these regions to Italy. This was refused after the lapse of some weeks, but an Italian Military Mission was sent out to Tiflis, where it still is. Meanwhile, there has been a great development of Italian commercial activity, and the Italian Government are considering the idea of supporting the republics' claims to independence in return for the promise of concessions, of which Transcaucasia, rich in oil, timber, coal, and metal ores, can offer enough and to spare. The sinister feature in these proceedings is that there is good ground to suppose the Italians to be screening German commercial interests, which are far from reconciled to the permanent loss of the commercial plums secured to them by the German-Georgian Treaty of May-June 1918. German prestige stands high in Georgia owing to the support given against the Turks, and the presence in Georgia for some months before the Armistice of a picked garrison of German troops.

The Transcaucasian Problem.

The Transcaucasian problem is bound up with the greater question of Russia. This point has been sufficiently brought out in the above notes and need not be laboured. On the case of Georgia and Azerbaijan, inclusion as autonomous provinces in a federated Russia would be a compromise which need not perhaps be ruled out.

The future of Armenia seems at the present time to depend on whether a mandatory Power can be found to accept the responsibility for watching over her development.

The connection of Transcaucasia with the Turkish settlement is much less close. The only direct link is the territorial question as regards the new Armenian State, and, less directly, the possible repercussion of the peace terms on Azerbaijan with her Pan-Islamic tendencies.

But, apart from these considerations, Great Britain, as an Eastern Power, cannot disinterest herself from the Transcaucasian settlement. Transcaucasia is one of the most important gateways to the east. Her railways (Batoum-Baku and Batoum-Tiflis-Julfa) lead respectively to the Caspian and so to Krasnovodsk and Turkestan, seething with Bolshevik and Pan-Islamic agitation, and into Persia, where Great Britain has recently assumed new responsibilities. The projected Aliat-Julfa line, originally surveyed by the Russians, and for the construction of which the Azerbaijanis are now seeking foreign assistance, will link up the two systems and allow the currents of trade and propaganda carried by the one to be easily diverted to the other. It would seem essential that the countries through which pass these vital arteries of communication between East and West should be both prosperous and well-disposed to Great Britain and to British policy.

The Question of Recognition.

It must be conceded at once that Armenia is in a different position from Georgia and Azerbaijan in this respect, since all the Allied Powers during the war have committed themselves more or less directly to the creation of an independent Armenian State under a European or an American mandate. The only question to be decided in the case of Armenia is the extent of Turkish territory which should be added to the Erivan Republic to make up the new State.

Turning to Georgia and Azerbaijan, the claim of the former to be independent existence is infinitely stronger than that of Azerbaijan. Georgia has had a long history as an independent State, and possesses a cohesion and capacity for self-government much superior to those hitherto manifested by the mixed population of Azerbaijan. The latter, like Daghestan, was for centuries under Persian rule, and has no more moral claim to independence than have the inhabitants of the Persian provinces of Ghilan and Azerbaijan. At the same time it is very difficult, if not impossible, to treat Georgia in one way and Azerbaijan in another. If the Russians are allowed to cross the Caucasus range and occupy Azerbaijan at one end of the Batoum-Baku railway, the liberties of Georgia can never be secure. On the other hand, in the absence of any more definite expression of local opinion in favour of such a course, it would be difficult for His Majesty's Government to consent to the reincorporation of the Republic of Azerbaijan, carrying with it of course Baku and its vast oil resources, in Persia. Such a step would be resented more bitterly by Russians of all shades of political opinion than the establishment of Azerbaijan as an independent State.

For practical purposes it must therefore be assumed that the two republics must be treated on the same footing. The problem then becomes largely one of—

- (a.) How far we are prepared to affront Denikin and the All-Russia party, and
- (b.) How much importance we attach to the creation of buffer States between Persia and the reconstituted Russia of the future.

An idea which appears to command a considerable amount of sympathy among the advocates of a federated Russia is that the independence of the republics should be immediately recognised by the Allies, and that they should be placed under a British or American mandate, pending the formation of the League of Nations. Recognition should be dependent on the agreement of the republics concerned (including possibly Armenia) to form a federated State, and should be followed by a declaration of the mandatory Power's willingness to extend its mandate over any autonomous part of the former Russian Empire, provided its governing body is formed on a democratic basis. It is anticipated that the immediate effect of this step would be to secure the incorporation of the Don, Terek and Kuban Cossack districts, followed by the Ukraine, in the new federated State. This latter would gradually extend all over the former Russian Empire, forming a democratic federated republic in which there would be no room for Bolshevism.

Action on these lines could hardly fail to bring the mandatory Power into acute conflict with Denikin and the All-Russia Party, and to involve responsibilities which no single Allied Power would probably care to undertake at the present time.

Another alternative would be to continue to abstain from recognising the independence of Georgia and Azerbaijan until General Denikin's position becomes more certain, whilst putting pressure on him not to attack either of these two republics.

A third alternative would be to recognise the independence of Georgia and Azerbaijan forthwith, subject to the decision of the League of Nations in, say, five years' time as to their reincorporation, as autonomous States, in a Russia reconstituted on a federal basis. Prompt action on these lines might possibly restrain General Denikin from employing the winter months in the subjugation of Transcaucasia, which there is every indication that he is at present contemplating. On the other hand, it may be doubted whether qualified recognition of this kind would be by itself sufficient to force him and the party for which he stands into the arms of Germany.

Foreign Office, December 24, 1919.

[165864/ME 58]

No. 82.

Mr. Wardrop to Earl Curzon.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 234.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tiflis, December 26, 1919.

FOLLOWING from Colonel Stokes:—

"According to reliable information some 1,500 Bolsheviks from Georgia and Azerbaijan are being sent via Baku to Persia. First 500 are now leaving Baku in small boats for Lenkoran, whence they will enter Persia by land. Persian Commissioner at Baku has asked his Government to take precaution on frontier, and is also, I understand, suggesting that two armed ships flying Persian flag but with some British personnel be placed on Caspian to guard Persian littoral.

"Question of control over Caspian Sea in my opinion demands immediate consideration.

"Denikin's fleet is unsatisfactory, and is expected to join Bolsheviks if they take Krasnovodsk. One ship already mutinied, resulting in disbandment of crew and execution of five ringleaders.

"Bolshevik fleet prevented coming south only by lack of fuel. Unless prompt measures are taken Bolshevik control of Caspian appears to be probable at no distant date.

"To avoid this following alternatives are suggested:—

"(a.) Take over from Denikin all, or at least four, of armed ships we gave him and replace on them British personnel and run fleet as British.

"(b.) Take over the four ships from Denikin and allot two each to Azerbaijan and Persia, giving them necessary British personnel.

"(c.) Arm and commission three Caspian gunboats taken last year [groups omitted] 'Astrabad,' 'Kars' and 'Ardahan' now used at Baku, manning them with partly British crews.

"If feasible, alternative (a) is recommended.

"In addition, in order to give Azerbaijan badly-needed assurance that Baku will not be at mercy of armed ships on Caspian, whether Bolshevik or Denikin, I strongly urge breech-blocks of two 6-inch guns mounted by us at Baku be handed over to Azerbaijan Government with sufficient ammunition for use in case of attack from sea. Breech-blocks believed to be at Constantinople."

I concur, and, as regards last paragraph, would suggest breech-blocks and ammunition be conveyed to Batoum immediately to be held in readiness for transport to Baku in case of need.

(Repeated to Constantinople, No. 79.)

[163107/ME 44]

No. 83.

Earl Curzon to M. Cambon.

Your Excellency,

Foreign Office, December 29, 1919.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's note of the 18th instant, on the subject of the position of the nationals of Allied States in relation to the Ottoman courts, and to state that, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, the subjects of Allied belligerent States should not be amenable to Turkish jurisdiction during the armistice. The question of any extension of capitulatory rights to States which did not enjoy them before the war cannot, in the view of His Majesty's Government, be decided until the conclusion of peace with Turkey. His Majesty's High Commissioner at Constantinople has been instructed to act with his colleagues on these lines.

The whole question of the position of the courts at Constantinople has been referred to the Law Officers of the Crown, whose decision I am awaiting.

I have, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[163694/ME 44]

No. 84.

Earl Curzon to Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck (Constantinople).

(No. 1905.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, December 30, 1919.

YOUR despatch No. 2284 of 6th December: Jurisdiction at Smyrna.

Law officers having been consulted as to jurisdiction at Constantinople, we must await their opinion before deciding as to Smyrna.